

**Oil tank spill
stirs up Pandacan
neighborhood**

**House approves long-delayed
P1-trillion budget; now it has
to clear in hostile Senate**

**PNP claims not given
due process by CHR
in Bicutan siege probe**

**Gov't offers loan
to producers to stir
activity in film industry**

**Online 'hacktivists' launch
virtual sit-in vs cops website**



COMPUTER-SAVVY FILIPINO protesters took civil disobedience to cyberspace yesterday, launching a "virtual sit-in" campaign that urges online activists to overwhelm the police website with numerous hits.

ONLINE/A3

email: feedback@inquirer.com.ph

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

Friday, March 24, 2006

★★

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website: www.inq7.net

**Teacher in GenSan asks
erring pupils to undress**

By Alcuin Papa in Manila
and Aquiles Z. Zonia, PDI Mindanao Bureau

EVEN AS THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION warned public school teachers yesterday against inflicting harmful or unusual punishment on students, parents were up in arms against another teacher who allegedly forced Grade 6 pupils who did poorly in exams to undress before their classmates.

TEACHER/A15

Filipino singer wins world jazz competition in London

By Tonette Orejas
PDI Central Luzon Desk

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—ONCE again, a Filipino is the best of 'em. Jazz singer Mon David won the grand prize in the prestigious London International Jazz Competition (LIJC) last Wednesday, besting 106 vocalists from 27 countries. The 52-year-old native of Pampanga began his performance at

the finals—held at the Cadogan Hall in London's Sloane Square—with a few bars of an ethnic chant, singing a cappella the first lines of "Nature Boy," and then crooning "My One and Only Love" and "Lullaby of Birdland." As LIJC Jazz Vocalist 2006, David will receive £1,000 (nearly P90,000) and take on engagements at the Jazz in Ascot and the 606 Club in Chelsea.

Confirming on Thursday news of his winning, David told his friends in Pampanga that in his spiel, he shared his "amazement at how music can transcend borders and cultural differences, how it can bring people together, how it can truly set us free."

Said David's 19-year-old daughter Nikki: "We were asking him if he had felt like he won it after he

FILIPINO/A15



THE ONE AND ONLY Mon David (center) bested 106 jazz singers from 27 countries. On hand to fete him are RP Ambassador to the Court of St James's Edgardo Espiritu, Ann David, Lydia Espiritu, Mishka Adams, Ariz Guinto (partly hidden) and Nieves Bates of Candid Records.

Cha-cha gets going today

Barangay assemblies start people's initiative to amend Charter



SIGNS OF THE TIMES. At the Legaspi Village Park, Legaspi Street, Makati City, an ordinary streamer could well be a cause for alarm. It announces the annual barangay general assembly. Only this year's is different. Its main agenda is to kick off a signature campaign to amend the Constitution through a people's initiative. It begins today nationwide, according to the reports of the PDI news bureaus.

By Joey A. Gabieta, PDI Visayas Bureau
Norman Bordadora and Juan Escandor Jr.
PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

THE SIGNATURE CAMPAIGN to amend the Constitution began early this week and is expected to intensify when barangay assemblies are convened nationwide tomorrow March 25 and again on Oct. 21, officials yesterday said.

The barangay assemblies have the imprimatur of the Department of Interior and Local Government.

In Memorandum Circular No. 2006-25, issued March 10, the DILG directed local government officials to conduct the assemblies on March 25 and Oct. 21.

A people's initiative is one of the three modes of amending the 1987 Constitution. The others are Congress convening itself into a constituent assembly (Con-Ass) and a constitutional convention (Con-con) whose delegates are elected.

In the people's initiative, a petition for amendments requires the signatures of at least 12 percent of the total number of registered voters and at least 3 percent of every congressional district's registered voters.

Malacañang, through the DILG, is apparently pushing for a people's initiative because it is averse to a Con-con and Con-Ass is not likely to be convened because of strong opposition from senators.

Leyte Gov. Jericho Petilla acknowledged that a signature campaign for amending the Constitution through a people's initiative would be the main agenda in the barangay assemblies.

Petilla told the INQUIRER that he had directed all mayors and barangay officials in the province to gather the needed signatures in their respective areas during the assemblies.

CHA-CHA/A15

20 officers in plot face court-martial

By Dona Z. Pazzibugan

THE PHILIPPINE ARMY HAS recommended court-martial proceedings against Brig. Gen. Danilo Lim, the sacked Scout Ranger commander, and 19 other officers for allegedly participating in the aborted coup attempt against President Macapagal-Arroyo last month.

The Army chief, Lt. Gen. Hermogenes Esperon, made the recommendation to Gen. Generoso Senga, Armed Forces chief of staff, according to Maj. Bartolome Bacarro, the Army spokesperson.

The Army investigated 59 officers and 37 enlisted personnel in connection with the plan to withdraw support from Ms Arroyo during a rally commemorating the 20th anniversary of the People Power revolution on Feb. 24.

"The 20 officers recommended for general court-martial have varying degrees of participation in the foiled coup. However, the final decision will be up to the chief of staff," Bacarro said yesterday.

He said these officers, including Lim, could be charged with vi-

20 OFFICERS/A10

Garci: Why blame fake passport on me?

By Michael Lim Ubac
and Philip C. Tubeza

THE MAN AT THE CENTER OF THE PURPORTED fraud that marked the 2004 presidential polls expressed bewilderment yesterday over the finding of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) that a passport he had submitted to the joint House inquiry on the "Hello Garci" scandal was fake.

The BSP prints all Philippine passports for the Department of Foreign Affairs.

Reached yesterday by phone at his farm in Bukidnon, former Election Commissioner Virgilio Garcillano said that before he turned over the passport (No. J243816) to the five House committees that conducted the probe, he had been holding it since it was issued in 2002.

"It has always been in my possession ...

kept at my residence in Barangay Kauswagan, Cagayan de Oro City," he said, pointing out that the passport was issued by the Department of Foreign Affairs satellite office in that city.

Garcillano, 68, claimed that when he submitted his two passports to the joint inquiry, he believed they were "genuine."

He took issue with Cavite Rep. Gilbert

GARCI/A8

Lafayette to resume mining; inquiry on

AUSTRALIA'S LAFAYETTE MINING Ltd. has announced it will resume work in the Philippines—halted after a toxic spill—but a local official says the Arroyo administration has given assurance that this will happen only upon the completion of a Church-led inquiry.

Reuters news agency said in a dispatch from Sydney that Lafayette's announcement yesterday drove its stock 18 percent higher in the Australian Stock Exchange.

Fr. Leo Dolo of the Social Action Center of the Diocese of Sorsogon said in a phone interview yesterday that Lafayette would not be allowed to resume operations until an independent team convened by Bishop Arturo Bastes had completed its inquiry into the viability and acceptability

of the firm's project.

During a visit to Albay in February, the President gave Bastes the go-ahead to form a team of experts that would investigate the Rapu-Rapu Polymetallic Project, once called the flagship of the revived Philippine mining industry. Ms Arroyo herself designated Bastes chair of the probe team.

Lafayette also said its managing director, Andrew McIlwain, had resigned, and that it had secured A\$42 million (P1.5 billion) in funding support to underpin its operations in the Philippines via share placements and subordinated debt.

Lafayette Mining, through its subsidiary, Lafayette Philippines Inc., runs the sprawling gold, copper and silver mine on Rapu-Rapu island in Albay.

LAFAYETTE/A8



MOUNTAIN SUBDUED

Only seven volcanic earthquakes were recorded of the Mt. Bulusan activities the past 24 hours. But Phivolcs warns the threat to hazardous explosion remains. (Story on Page A11.)

Palace says ad plan won't 'choke' media

By Alcuin Papa
and Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

MALACAÑANG YESTERDAY assured the public that a new executive order seeking to consolidate the advertising budgets of all government agencies, including the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office (PCSO) and Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corp. (Pagcor), was not meant to curtail press freedom.

But the National Union of Journalists in the Philippines (NUJP) said Executive Order No. 511 could be used to harass a critical media.

Carlos Conde, an NUJP official, said there was nothing wrong with streamlining government ad budgets, "but if you look at the political context of the past few months it becomes telling."

"We have a government that wants to control the flow of information," he said.

President Macapagal-Arroyo signed EO 511 on March 6, creat-

PALACE/A10



WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Visayas and Mindanao will experience mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and isolated thunderstorms. The rest of the country will have partly cloudy skies with isolated rainshowers or thunderstorms.

SOURCE: PAGASA

E-mail: pr_news@inquirer.com.ph

Second FRONT PAGE

Text us your feedback: Inquirer news name/age/city/message to 2207 (Globe) or 283 (Smart)

Manila	Partly Cloudy	Ulaog/Boac	Cloudy with Rains
Bago	Partly Cloudy	Roxas	Partly Cloudy
Tuguegarao	Partly Cloudy	Cebu	Cloudy with Rains
Laoag	Partly Cloudy	Tacloban	Cloudy with Rains
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	San. Santes	Partly Cloudy
Tagaytay	Partly Cloudy	Zamboanga	Cloudy with Rains
Legazpi	Partly Cloudy	Cagayan de Oro	Cloudy with Rains
Calapan	Partly Cloudy	Davao	Cloudy with Rains

House OKs P1-trillion budget

By Michael Lim Ubac

Cardinal Rosales to get Red Hat in Vatican rites

MANILA ARCHBISHOP CARDINAL Gaudencio B. Rosales will receive today the Red Hat (biretta), symbol of his elevation to the College of Cardinals, from Pope Benedict XVI in a consistory to be held at the Vatican in Rome, according to a news release from the Archdiocese of Manila.

Rosales joins 14 others, two of them Asians, who were named cardinals by the Pope in February. The 15 cardinals will help the pontiff guide the world's more than one billion Catholics.

Rosales, 73, only recently succeeded the late, legendary Cardinal Jaime Sin as archbishop of Manila, the largest diocese in Asia. He has spoken out on social issues in the Philippines, saying the recent landslide in the country was due to de-forestation, and called on the government to address the issue.

The cardinals gathered in Rome Wednesday for a day of "prayer and reflection" ahead of the first consistory under Benedict.

Yesterday was designated a day of prayer, a kind of "brainstorming" session to discuss problems facing the Church worldwide, in what observers say is an example of Benedict's stated intention to have greater collegiality, or consultation, within the Church.



CARDINAL ROSALES

The gathering of top clergy will show the two faces of the Roman Catholic Church in quick succession — the secrecy of yesterday's behind-closed-doors meeting contrasting starkly with the colorful public ceremony today in which the new cardinals will receive the trappings of their high office.

Yesterday's gathering, unprecedented in Benedict's short reign, involved all 193 cardinals, including the 15 to be elevated as "Princes of the Church" at today's

solemn ceremony.

The 78-year-old German Pope expected the meeting to "speak freely" on the key issues facing the Church, according to French cardinal-elect Albert Vanhoye.

"We will be able to speak about the lack of vocations, relations with civil authorities and other problems," said Vanhoye, a Jesuit.

The pontiff was expected to address the cardinals at the end of the meeting.

During the consistory, each cardinal will be blessed by the Pope and be handed a red zucchetto (skull cap) and a red biretta to wear over it. The blood-red color of the cardinals' vestments and headwear signifies their willingness to die for their faith.

The consistory will be held in front of around 7,000 diplomats, relatives and ordinary pilgrims in the Vatican's Paul VI Hall. Each new cardinal will later be assigned a room at the Vatican in which to greet wellwishers and diplomats.

Rosales will celebrate a thanksgiving Mass with Filipino migrants, priests and religious in Italy on Sunday at the Sta. Maria Maggiore church. He will be back in Manila on March 30. *With a report from AFP*

THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES APPROVED ON SECOND reading at dawn yesterday the P1.05-trillion General Appropriations Act (GAA) of 2006, the biggest-ever national budget which the administration claims will strongly help bail the country out of its economic and political woes.

An ecstatic Speaker Jose de Venecia lauded the feat, saying that despite the political crisis, the 236-member chamber of "all colors and stripes summoned the political will and courage" to approve the proposed budget of the Arroyo administration, which is currently operating on a reenacted budget.

Two years ago, the 2003 budget was rolled over as lawmakers, distracted by campaigning for the 2004 election, failed to pass a new one. Last year's budget was not passed until March.

Passage of the 2006 budget had already been delayed by a presidential order that kept government officials from congressional hearings since a political crisis last year, when President Macapagal-Arroyo survived an impeachment attempt over the allegations.

"With this trillion-pesos budget, we could create significant growth to help strengthen our war on poverty, so that we can lift Filipinos from poverty and start building a modern Filipino middle class," De Venecia said.

'Priority blueprint'

In her budget message to Congress, President Arroyo said the proposed GAA, which will boost spending nearly 15 percent after years of restraint, was her government's "priority blueprint and commitment to ensure sustained socio-economic growth and push reforms."

Albay Rep. Joey Salceda, chair of the House appropriations committee, said congressmen approved the measure "as is, where is as President Arroyo submitted, to the last comma, except for grammatical slips."

"It preserves the trajectory of deficit reduction. Yet it is the first growth-inducing budget with 52 percent increase in capital outlay," said Salceda, the chamber's in-house economist and one of

President Arroyo's economic advisers.

If enacted, he added, the budget would help further reduce the gaping budget deficit and spur economic activity through increased government spending for infrastructure, health, education, among others.

He said the budget also "scores on major social policy initiatives" in health with universal health coverage for indigents, in education with P1.8 billion for English textbooks and P2 billion for food for schoolchildren.

"It signals that a gradual return to political normalization is possible. It should put to rest suspicions that a reenacted budget is good for Charter change," said Salceda.

In what is expected to be a formality, the bill will be presented to the lower house for a third and final reading on Tuesday, with just minor refinements likely, said Salceda.

Belligerent Senate

But the long-delayed bill must still clear a belligerent Senate.

Sen. Manuel Villar, chair of the Senate committee on finance, said in a television interview it was likely the budget bill would not be ratified by both houses of Congress until June.

The bill will move to the Senate — where some senators have been accused by the government of supporting efforts to destabilize Arroyo — after the 1,600-page document has been printed, a process that may take more than a week, Villar said.

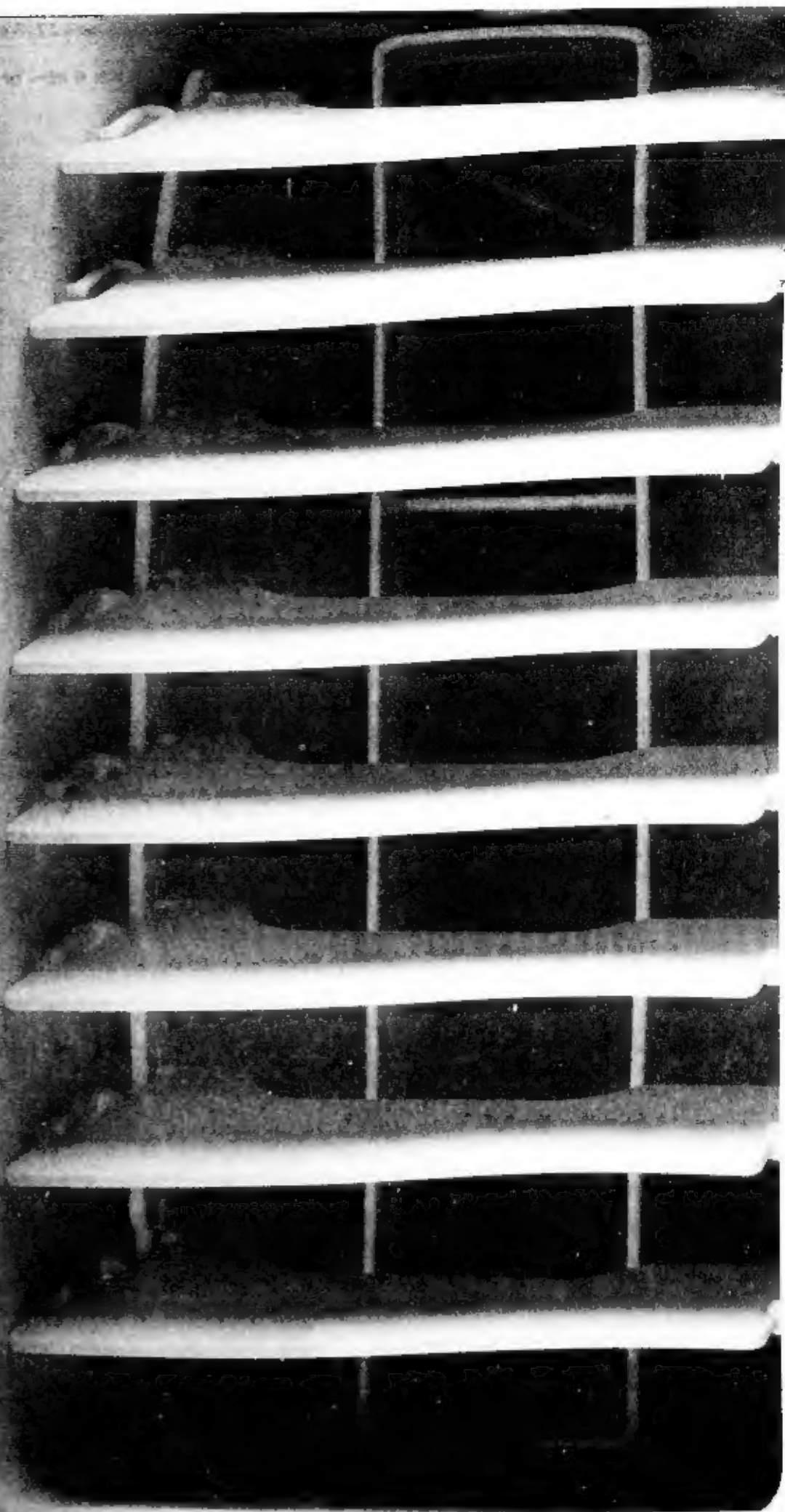
"Most of our deliberations have been finished and my committee is ready to report," Villar said. "But we really don't have enough time to discuss the budget because I'm sure we will get that on the week before we adjourn for Easter." *With a report from Reuters*

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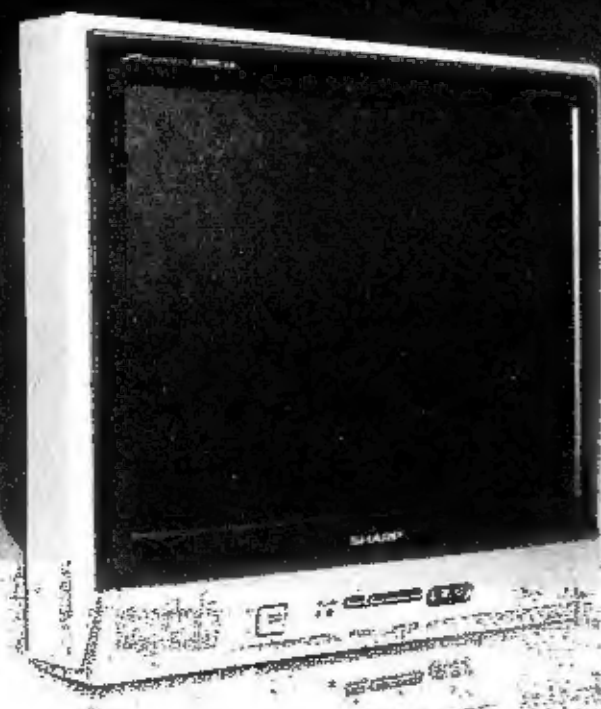
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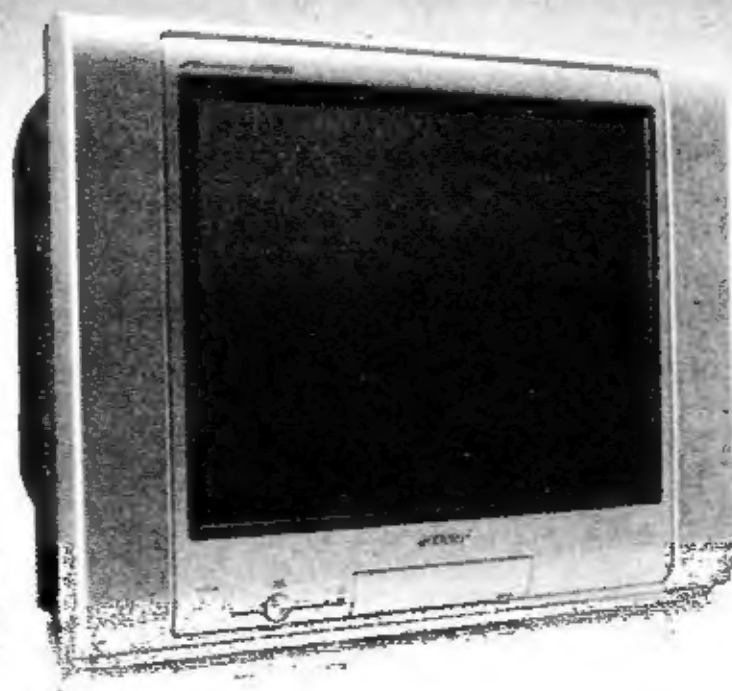
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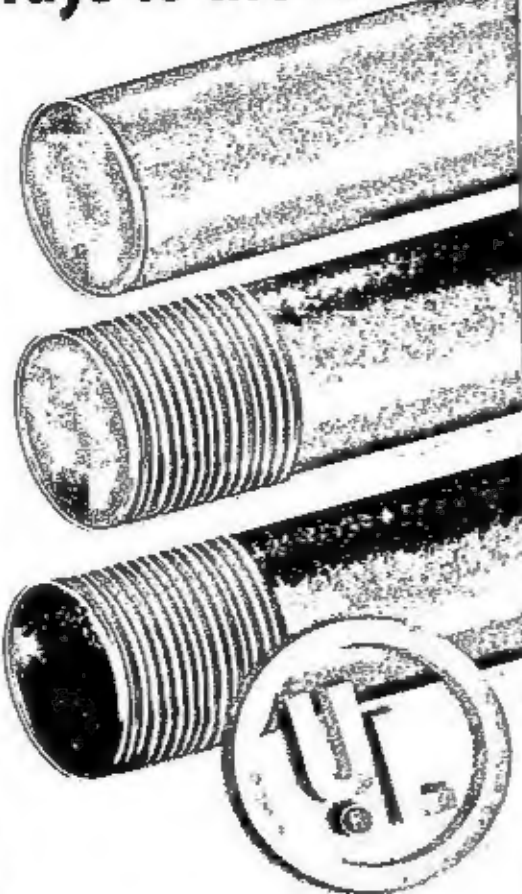
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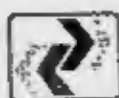
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ROSARIO S. BERNALDO - President, CGIP A CPA & lawyer, she is a leading advocate and practitioner of corporate secretaryship and is a board member of over 25 multinational and non-profit organizations.

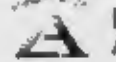
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BUSINESSWORLD



Lawsuit Alternatives



Gov't, Moro rebs fail to hammer out deal

DIFFERENCES OVER THE SHARING OF strategic resources has delayed the signing of an informal deal between the Filipino government and Islamic rebels to end nearly 40 years of conflict, a government negotiator said yesterday.

Representatives of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) and the government ended two days of informal talks on Wednesday without settling issues of territory, governance and resources in the southern Philippines, where the MILF wants a Muslim homeland.

"There was not enough time to wrap up talks on the ancestral domain," said Rodolfo Garcia, a retired general and a member of the government's peace panel.

"There was a lot of haggling. This was expected from a revolutionary group seeking to strike the best deal from government."

Garcia said the two sides would need another round of talks to thresh out specifics of a deal on Muslims' ancestral rights in Mindanao, the country's fruit basket and a largely untapped repository of resources such as gold and copper.

He declined to go into specifics of the bargaining, which took place in neighboring Malaysia.

"We've settled the broader aspect of the agreement, but we're being weighed down by

the specific details. We've exchanged our position papers, but there's a lot of back and forth shuffling of the documents," he added.

The talks could resume early in April, when both sides will attempt again to break the deadlock and fix a date for the signing of a deal on ancestral domain, a key part of a process to end a conflict that has killed more than 120,000 people.

"These issues were not insurmountable," said Eid Kabalu, a spokesman for the MILF, the largest of four Muslim separatist rebel groups in the southern Philippines.

"The talks are moving and we're confident that the two sides would reach consensus at some point."

Garcia said the government understood the position of the rebels, who are concerned it will not keep its promises after another Muslim group, the Moro National Liberation Front, accused the government of undermining a separate 1996 peace deal.

The conclusion of informal discussions would pave the way for the first formal talks between the MILF, which broke away from the MNLF in 1984, and the government in three years.

The two sides hope to sign a landmark deal by the start of the Muslim holy month of Ramadan on Sept. 16.

Reuters

Correction

IN THE MARCH 18 ISSUE, a photo caption on the front page stated erroneously that President Macapagal-Arroyo attended the celebration of the 50th sacerdotal anniversary of the Cathedral of Saints Peter and Paul in Sorsogon City. The celebration was for the sacerdotal anniversary of Msgr. Augusto Laban—not the cathedral.

Readers may send their requests for correction of factual errors in writing to the Day Desk, Philippine Daily Inquirer, PDI Building, Chino Roces Avenue corner Mascarido Street, Makati City, fax Nos. 897-47-93/94; e-mail address: daydesk@inquirer.com.ph.

Complaints about lack of fairness or objectivity may be sent to Lorna Kalaw Tirol, readers' advocate, e-mail address: readersadvocate@inquirer.com.ph or fax Nos. 897-47-93/94, Attn: Readers Advocate. Her phone number is 897-8808 Local 342.

Wallace is graduation speaker in Pagsanjan

PETER WALLACE, LISTED BY BUSINESSWEEK as one of the top 20 influential businessmen in Asia, will be the speaker at the Pagsanjan Academy's 78th commencement exercise.

The graduation program is scheduled on April 1 starting at 4:30 p.m. at the school grounds in Pagsanjan, Laguna.

Wallace, an Australian by birth, is president and founder of the Wallace Forum, a Manila-based consulting firm.

A frequent speaker at business conferences and a consultant of various investors wishing to do business in the Philippines, he has also written commentaries and reports on the difficulty of doing business in the country.

The Pagsanjan Academy was founded in 1923 by the late Don Pedro Llamas, a 1908 graduate of the University of Michigan in the United States.

Philippine Launch

GLOBAL PLAN TO STOP TB (2006 - 2015)

March 24, 2006

Philippine International Convention Center
Manila, Philippines

The Philippine Launch of the Global Plan to Stop TB (2006-2015) is the Philippines' response to the global call to save 14 million lives in the next 10 years and eliminate TB by 2050.

Through this launch, we bring together more than 70 agencies, organizations, and institutions from the government and the private sector to fully endorse, finance and implement the global plan vis-à-vis the national and regional strategic plans to control TB.

The launch will also be highlighted by the Signing of the Petition for Call to Action by the more than 70 stakeholders attending the event.

Full implementation of the Global Plan to Stop TB (2006-2015) will:

- Save approximately 14 million lives;
- Treat about 50 million people, including some 800 000 patients with MDR-TB;
- Expand equitable access to quality TB diagnosis and treatment for all patients;
- Provide anti-retroviral treatment to around 3 million patients who have TB/HIV;
- Introduce, in 2010, the first new TB drug for 40 years and, in 2015, a new short TB regimen of 1 to 2 months;
- By 2010, enable rapid, sensitive and inexpensive detection of active TB with <point of care> diagnostics; and
- By 2015, develop a new, safe, effective and affordable vaccine, which will be available with potential for significant impact on TB control in later years.

The total cost of the Global Plan to Stop TB over its 10-year period is US\$ 56 BN (US\$ 47 BN for implementation of currently available interventions and US\$ 9 BN for research and development. There is a funding gap of about US\$ 31 BN.

PROGRAM OF ACTIVITIES

- 3:00 PM - Registration c/o the Secretariat
3:30 PM - Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) Anthem - * *Tayo tayo rin sa 2015*
- Launch of the Global Plan to Stop TB (2006 - 2015), Panel Discussion and Symbolic Signing of Commitment**
- 4:00 PM - Invocation and the Philippine National Anthem - UPCM Choir
- 4:05 PM - Opening Remarks
Sec. Francisco T. Duque III MD, MSc, Department of Health
- 4:10 PM - Global Plan Film
- 4:15 PM - Launch of the Global Plan to Stop TB (2006 - 2015)
Giorgio Rascigno MD, Executive Committee, Stop TB Partnership
- 4:25 PM - Stop TB Partnership Working Groups' Panelists -
Thelma E. Tupasi MD, Chair, Working Group on Drug-resistant TB
Maria C. Freire PhD, Chair, Working Group on New TB Drugs
Gijs Elzinga MD, Chair, Working Group on TB/HIV
- 4:40 PM - DOH - National Tuberculosis Control Program's Strategic Plan to Control TB (2006 - 2010)
Rosalind G. Vianzon MD, MPH, NTP Manager, DOH
- 4:45 PM - WHO Regional Plan to Control TB (2006 - 2010)
Pieter Johannes Van Maaren MD, MBA, WHO - WPRO
- 4:55 PM - Panel Discussion
Chaired by Dr. Giorgio Rascigno and Assisted by Yolanda Oliveras MD, MPH, DOH
- 5:25 PM - Signing of Petition for Call to Action
To be led by Sec. Francisco T. Duque III
- 6:00 PM - International Community's Response
Michael Voniatis MD, WHO - Philippines
- 6:05 PM - Engaging the Private Sector
Amelia G. Sarmiento MPH, Philippine Coalition Against Tuberculosis
- 6:10 PM - Private Sector Response
Ambassador Bienvenido Tan, Philippine Business for Social Progress
- 6:15 PM - Engaging the Public Sector
Mayor Feliciano Belmonte, Quezon City
- 6:20 PM - International Standards for Tuberculosis Care
Lee Reichman MD, MPH, New Jersey School of Medicine National TB Center
- 6:30 PM - Patients Charter of the Tuberculosis Community
Armand D. Esguerra
- 6:35 PM - Closing Remarks
Jubert P. Benedicto MD, Philippine Coalition Against Tuberculosis

Organized by the

Department of Health
Philippine Coalition Against Tuberculosis
Quezon City Government
Tropical Disease Foundation, Inc.
World Health Organization

Badjaos find new home in Zambales

By Cynthia D. Balana

A RESETTLEMENT VILLAGE FOR HOMELESS Badjao families who have been begging and vending in the streets of Metro Manila and Batangas will soon rise in Sta. Cruz, Zambales, Social Welfare and Development Secretary Esperanza Cabral announced yesterday.

Cabral said that at least 50 Badjao families will be the first settlers of the resettlement village. They will be provided with core shelter units and basic services like skills re-tooling and development; capability building that will improve their self-image; health and nutrition; education including functional literacy; and livelihood opportunities.

Romblon State College holds alumni fellowship

THE ROMBLON State College Alumni Association (RSCAA) will hold an evening of fellowship, entertainment and fundraising on April 1 at the school quadrangle school in Odiongan, Romblon.

Famed singer Marri Nallos, billed as the Crystal Voice of Asia, will provide entertainment to the event which will also welcome the new graduates of the school from both the college and high school.

Class presidents of different batches from the '50s, and probably earlier, will be asked to pledge contributions to the planned alumni building which will start construction this coming June.

RSC started as a farm school in 1916 formed under the Jones Law. It briefly

closed during the Pacific War, but it resumed as a high school carrying an academic curriculum. It is now a state college, after becoming an agricultural high school in the mid-fifties, with prospect of becoming the first university in the province.

The establishment of the resettlement village was in response to President Macapagal-Arroyo's directive to provide decent dwellings and other basic services to indigenous peoples, Cabral said.

Now on its social preparation phase as a pilot project, the resettlement village seeks to promote a self-reliant community of Badjao families.

It will be maintained as a social laboratory for the testing of new strategies, programs and projects that will benefit the Badjaos and other indigenous peoples.

"We hope that with basic services already within their reach, they will no longer go to the metropolis to beg," Cabral said.

Commonly called the sea gypsies, the Badjaos are the second largest indigenous people in Sabah. Although the precise origin of the Badjao is unknown, records showed they may have come from Johore, in peninsular Malaysia, long before the two Borneo states became a part of the country.

The Badjao have been a nomadic, seafaring people for most of their history. They chart particularly the waters of the Sulu Sea, off the southwestern coast of the Philippines, and the various seas that surround the Indonesian island of Sulawesi.

Many of them had left their ancestral lands in Zamboanga, Basilan and Sulu archipelago because of piracy in the seas and the worsening economic crisis in the areas, and went to major cities to earn a living through begging.



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By Luigi A. del Puerto

PNP Chief Director General Arturo Lomibao said he was "saddened" by the CHR's release of its report on the Bicutan hostage cri-

Lomibao sought to remind the public that the Bicutan crisis claimed the lives of three jail guards and one police officer.

In its report released last Thursday, the CHR said the Department of Justice should determine the liability of police officers and their superiors, including former Interior Secretary Angelo Reyes who

CHR commissioner Wilhelm Soriano said the commission's investigation, including interviews

"The Abu Sayyaf inmates there were highly dangerous criminals involved in terrorist attacks, and

"This notwithstanding, our respect for the CHR and its findings are not diminished. We welcome this as a chance for the CHR to prove its case and establish probable cause before the Department of Justice," he said.

By Norman Bordadora

In his defense on Wednesday Estrada said he could not have stolen the money intended for tobacco farmers.

Prosecution awaits

As to Estrada's claim that they were never bosom friends, Singson said: "How come he stood as principal sponsor at my son's wedding? How come I am godfather to his son by Laarni [Enriquez]?"

Singson also said that Lacson, the then Philippine National Police chief, allegedly wanted to corner the illegal gambling payoffs for the PNP because he wanted to run for President.

All out vs iueteng

"Even high-ranking PNP officers who were very close to me at the time [but] who failed to go all-out against jueteng operations were punished," he said.

Lacson also said that the thought of running for public office "never occurred" to him "at that time."

With reports from Philip
Tubera and Nelson E Flores

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THE DAILY GOSPEL



Friday, March 24, 2006
3rd Week of Lent

1st Reading: Hos 14:2-3
Gospel: Mark 12:28-34

A teacher of the Law had been listening to this discussion and admired how Jesus answered them. So he came up and asked him, "Which commandment is the first of all?"

Jesus answered, "The first is: Hear, Israel! The Lord, our God, is One Lord; and you shall love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind and with all your strength. And after this comes another one: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. There is no commandment greater than these two."

The teacher of the Law said to him, "Well spoken, Master; you are right when you say that he is one and there is no other. To love him with all our heart, with all our understanding and with all our strength, and to love our neighbor as ourselves is more important than any burnt offering or sacrifice."

Jesus approved this answer and said, "You are not far from the kingdom of God." But after that, no one dared to ask him any more questions.

Commentary

God is forever pleading with us to come back, come home from our distractions to other countries, powers and people. God is all mercy waiting on us and He wants to love us freely! We are promised freshness, blessings, fruit, understanding, if only we'd walk with God... but we stumble and tread other paths.

Jesus is blunt with one of the Scribes. You know the law: LOVE God with everything—heart, soul, mind and strength (meaning resources) and love your neighbor the same way. The Scribe praises Jesus but Jesus tells him that he is close to the kingdom, but not there yet. The law opens the latch, but you must walk the way of Jesus, obeying the law in regard to all, including enemy and foe.

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GMA vows to spend more on education

By Christine O. Avendaño

SAYING THAT HER GOVERNMENT COULD now afford to spend money for education, President Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday vowed to produce not only more good readers among the country's grade school children by the time her term ends in 2010 but also world-class Filipino workers.

At the launch of the "Bright Minds Read" fund-raising program spearheaded by McDonald's Charities at Malacañang, Ms Arroyo underscored the need for the government to spend more on basic education.

"Indeed if we want to make sure that we continue with a good, world-class Filipino worker, well-educated and skilled, we have to spend on basic education," she said.

Thanking McDonald's Charities and its partners in promoting reading and literacy among schoolchildren through the Bright Minds Read program since 2002, the President disclosed that she had ordered Budget Secretary Rolando Andaya to release P500 million for the purchase of textbooks and instructional materials for public schools this year.

On top of this, she said the government aims to close the classroom gap by 2010 by building 6,000 grade school classrooms every year, adopting double-shift classes, distributing high school vouchers to provide assistance to private high

school students, providing scholarships to poor college and vocational students and providing every high school with computers.

She claimed the government has built more than 14,000 classrooms

since her new term began in June 2004. "We are enabled by a strong peso, by strong investments, including McDonald's, by mild inflation, by a budget deficit way below ceiling," Ms Arroyo said.

She marvelled at the way the reading

program was now being implemented in up to 37,200 public schools nationwide, compared to the 14 schools the project covered when it started in 2002 after a study showed that four out of 10 first-graders could not read.



DILAG

Judge opts out of Subic rape case

THE JUDGE HANDLING THE SUBIC RAPE case on Thursday announced he was inhibiting himself from the case and confirmed the delay in the arraignment of four US Marines set for today.

Judge Renato Dilag said he decided to be out of the case after the private lawyers of the 22-year-old complainant, a Filipina from Zamboanga City, filed a motion for his inhibition.

The motion alleged that the judge's son, lawyer Raymond Anthony Dilag, was an associate of the Rodrigo Berenguer & Guno law offices, which is defending one of the four accused, Staff Sgt. Chad Brian Carpentier.

Dilag said his son resigned from the firm in August 2004.

Explaining his decision that came less than 20 minutes after the motion was filed at 4 p.m., the judge said: "I would like to dispel any doubt regarding my future action on this case."

"I want the cold neutrality of the court to rule," he said.

His inhibition from the case, he said, would require Executive Judge Avelino Lazo to re-allocate the case to the two other remaining judges in Olongapo City.

The woman's lawyers filed the motion after Dilag on Wednesday junked the omnibus motion asking him to declare as unconstitutional the Visiting Forces Agreement, defer the arraignment until the issues of custody and jurisdiction were settled, and issue a new arrest warrant against Smith and Lance Corporals Daniel Smith, Keith Silkwood and Dominic Duplant, the accused in the case.

The 22-year-old woman has accused the four Marines of raping her last November, just after joint US-Philippine military exercises in the nearby former US naval base of Subic.

Dilag stressed that he was not being intimidated into pulling out, saying "I did not feel any pressure coming from anybody."

The Marines have insisted only one of them had sex with the woman and that the act was consensual.

The men are in the custody of the US Embassy. It has refused to hand them over to local authorities, citing a provision in a Visiting Forces Agreement that allows them to keep soldiers in their custody during legal proceedings.

The alleged rape has triggered anti-American street protests in the country and leftist groups have been using it as an issue to attack the government's ties with its principal security ally. **Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk, with a report from APP**

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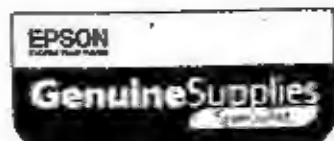
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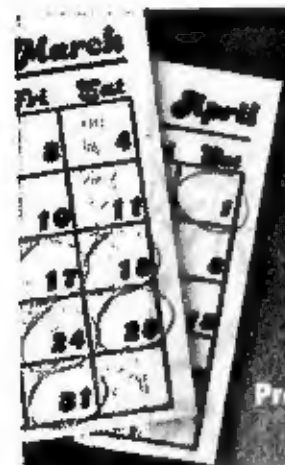
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Lafayette to resume mining; inquiry still on

From page A1

Shares of the mining firm, which traded as high as 26 cents in the last 12 months, were up 13.6 percent at 12.5 cents, down slightly from an earlier peak of 13 cents.

The Philippine government suspended operations at the mine in January and fined the company almost P11 million after two cyanide spills that angered villagers and killed fish. (See related story in *Across the Nation*, Page A18.)

Lafayette said it had undertaken technical remedial work at the mine imposed by the government before being allowed to restart.

"Commissioning activities will be progressed, culminating in base metal production anticipated in mid-April,"

Lafayette said in a statement to the Australian Stock Exchange.

To avoid more pollution, Lafayette raised the mining plant's dam wall and widened its base and expanded the waste tailings receiving pond.

Gov't commitment

Dolo said that Bastes received a commitment on this from Environment Secretary Angelo T. Reyes during President Macapagal-Arroyo's two-hour closed-door meeting with anti-mining bishops at the Traders Hotel in Manila on March 10.

"He (Reyes) assured Bishop Bastes. What will be the point of the investigation if Lafayette is al-

ready allowed to resume operations?" said Dolo.

Reyes has been quoted in earlier reports as saying that he and the Sorsogon bishop had an "agreement" to wait for the results of the investigation before deciding on whether to lift the suspension order against Lafayette. He said Bastes had asked for a month to complete the inquiry, which would also look into the legality of the project.

The team has completed consultations with communities in Legazpi City, Sorsogon and Rapu-Rapu, Dolo said.

Still many hurdles

Environment Undersecretary Demetrio Ignacio yesterday said

there were still "many hurdles" to the resumption of the gold processing operation.

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources has cancelled the wastewater discharge permit issued to Lafayette, which means the firm could not use its tailings pond until its permit is restored.

Lafayette submitted its comprehensive pollution control program Wednesday, detailing its compliance with the government's requirements.

During the 1970s and 1980s, the Philippines was one of the world's biggest mining centers, but two decades of neglect, environmental mishaps and clashes

over land rights have stunted its potential.

1st developed after 4 decades

The Rapu-Rapu mine was the first to be developed by foreigners in nearly four decades.

Lafayette late last year said the discharges of cyanide, used to segregate gold from ore, into local water systems had only "minimal environmental effects."

The most recent spill, last Nov. 1, was caused by heavy rains at the mine site and followed an earlier larger spill last Oct. 11.

Before the suspension, the mine was forecast to yield predominantly copper and zinc, though it will also account for

50,000 ounces of gold and half a million ounces of silver each year as a by-product from the base metals ore.

South Korea's LG Co. International Ltd. and its government's resources investment arm, Kores, together hold 26 percent of Lafayette's Philippine subsidiary.

At full production rates, the mine has been forecast to yield enough concentrate—ground ore—each year to enable partner LG International to glean 10,000 tons of copper and 14,000 tons of zinc from the material through the smelting process. With reports from Blanche S. Rivera and Cyril L. Bonabente, PDI Research, Reuters

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Garci: Why blame fake passport on me?

From page A1

Remulla, former lead chair of the probe, who had said that the BSP findings "strongly indicate a conspiracy to cover up" the alleged election fraud.

"What conspiracy?" Garcillano said. "What does the passport have to do with cheating? Even if I traveled outside the country, which I don't accept, can it prove cheating? I said it once and say it again: I don't accept doing any actions to help (President Macapagal-Arroyo) cheat."

Garcillano assailed the opposition for supposedly forgetting that the purpose of the House inquiry was "to find out if there was cheating" based on wiretapped conversations between him and Ms. Arroyo.

"My passport was in the committees' possession for more than three months now. Suddenly, they will say it [is fake]," he said.

"How could I have tampered [with] that? I have nothing to do with it because I did not issue the passport to myself. I don't even know how a passport is made," he added.

Garcillano said he did not want to impute malice on the part of DFA officials.

"They have been doing their job quite well. I'm not charging the DFA with anything. But I don't know how it came about. If it's fake, which I don't accept,

why would they blame it on me? I myself am surprised," he said.

Quoting the BSP findings, the chairs of the five House committees that looked into the "Hello Garci" scandal said Wednesday that Garcillano's passport No. JJ243816 "[did] not conform to standard" on six counts, but that his previous passport (No. BB602533) did.

In the country

Both passports had no entry, indicating that Garcillano did not leave the country during their validity, contrary to a Singapore government report that he stopped in the city-state in July en route to a third country.

Garcillano questioned the way the examination was conducted by four officials of the BSP Bank Notes and Securities Printing Department.

"I'm not sure whether a representative of the joint inquiry was present when the examination was made. Definitely, I did not send my counsel to at least witness the examination," he said.

Garcillano maintained that he did not leave the country at the height of the wiretapping scandal that nearly toppled the Arroyo administration last year.

He claimed not to have left the country since January 1994, when he arrived from the United States.

"I have always been here in the country ... with my wife," he said, pointing out that he was actually in Central Luzon on July 14, 2005, the day he supposedly flew to Singapore.

Palace: No hand in it

Garcillano reiterated his earlier contention that he had been reluctant at first to face the House inquiry out of fear for his life.

"I have doubts about the intentions of the administration ... and the opposition, too," he said.

Malacañang had no hand in the manufacture of Garcillano's fake passport, according to Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita.

"First of all, the Office of the President has nothing to do with it," Ermita told reporters.

He also pointed out that Garcillano had resigned from the Commission on Elections, "so I don't think there is a way we can make any kind of statement of circumstances about [the man]."

Michael Defensor, the President's chief of staff, asked that Malacañang not be dragged into the issue: "Sana huwag na nating idamay ang Palasyo dito sa pekeng passport ni Garcillano dahil wala tayong kinalaman dito (Let us not drag the Palace in the fake Garcillano passport issue because we do not have anything to do with it)."

"I think Mr. Garcillano must explain his side of the matter, and let us not make any judgments if we do not have any evidence," Defensor also said.

Asked if there was a need to let the DFA and the BSP explain what really happened, Defensor answered in the negative.

He said the Palace could only support the bid of the House joint inquiry to investigate the matter and to determine whether it should charge Garcillano with perjury.

"I think Mr. Garcillano can defend himself," Defensor said.

Falsification

Opposition Sen. Panfilo Lacson said his lawyers would charge Garcillano with falsification of public documents in an effort to make him identify the people who "fixed" his passport.

Lacson said he had received information that four fixers had produced the passport to make it appear that Garcillano did not leave the Philippines at the height of the "Hello Garci" controversy.

He said he would ask the Senate to summon Garcillano, adding that his office was also trying to reach the fixers to find out if any of them wanted to disclose information.

"My lawyers are now getting together to collate all documents and prepare the criminal complaint against Garcillano. Any taxpayer in this country can file a complaint against him," Lacson said, adding:

"It is an open-and-shut case against Garcillano [for] falsification of public documents. I want this case filed so that he would identify his contacts in the BSP I want him to point them out."

Lacson said the case could be filed today in the court in Pasay City, where the BSP is located.

He said Sen. Rodolfo Biazon, chair of the Senate committee on national defense and security that is looking into the "Hello Garci" tapes, also wanted to summon the BSP personnel who examined the passport before calling in Garcillano.

"The House has already closed its investigation, but in the Senate, we can issue an invitation and then subsequently a subpoena to Garcillano," Lacson said.

"And if he appears and does not tell the truth, our rules say that we can compel him to tell the truth under pain of being cited for contempt."

Latest info

Lacson said the latest information he got was that Garcillano had returned to his farm in Bukidnon.

"He was here [in Manila] a day or two last week. Our information is that he went to Malacañang for a meeting with you-know-

who last week. He only stayed for a short time here. He went [to Malacañang] with [lawyer] Roque Bello," the senator said.

Lacson warned that Garcillano might again go into hiding.

"It seems that is going to be the pattern. But it is going to be obvious for Malacañang if Garcillano again goes abroad this time. They're saying that this is a closed book, [but] we don't agree. Information and evidence keep coming out, so that the 'Hello Garci' [investigation] will continue," he said.

Lacson said he had a source "embedded in Garcillano's camp," and it was this person who informed him that Senior Supt. Asher Dolina, head of the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group in Metro Manila, was supposedly involved in the manufacture of the passport.

Commends BSP deputy gov

Lacson said that while he had verified that the fixers had a contact in the Bureau of Immigration, he still wanted to smoke out their contacts in the BSP.

He said BSP Deputy Governor Armando Suratos should be commended for immediately submitting the BSP findings to the House inquiry.

"We [looked at] the examination [report] and transmittal and both were dated March 20, 2006. This means Deputy Governor Suratos did not delay in transmitting the findings to Congress," Lacson said, adding:

"If this had been delayed by one more day, Malacañang would have gotten wind of the information that there was such a certification. He might have had a problem and could have been pressured."

"From what we gathered, Deputy Governor Suratos is a straight guy."

Genuine articles

Acting Foreign Secretary Franklin Ebdalin stressed yesterday that the DFA issued "genuine passports," including the one it issued to Garcillano four years ago.

"As to what happens after [a passport is issued], we don't know. We haven't seen [Garcillano's] passport," Ebdalin said at a press conference originally intended to discuss the Asean Eminent Persons Group.

He added: "We issued one legitimate passport to Mr. Garcillano in 2002 and it is still a valid passport."

After the press conference, DFA spokesperson Gilberto Asuque said there were now two passports with No. JJ243816, with the BSP finding that the passport Garcillano submitted to the joint House inquiry was fake.

Asuque said Garcillano's passport would only be cancelled if it was surrendered to the DFA regional office in Cagayan de Oro.

Garci liable

"To cancel it, we have to break the seal. The passport we issued him remains valid until February 2007," Asuque said.

He said that under the Philippine Passport Law, passports could be cancelled if the person were convicted of a crime, a fugitive, and had falsified his or her passport.

Asuque said that with the BSP finding, Garcillano was now liable "for falsifying, counterfeiting a passport."

Those who produced the fake passport and gave it to him were also liable, Asuque said, adding that violators faced a P60,000-P150,000 fine and imprisonment of six years at least or 15 years at most.

But Garcillano said: "How can they charge me with falsification? Did I falsify anything in the passport?" With reports from Christine O. Avendaño and Nikko Dizon



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Online 'hacktivists' launch ...

From page A1

Protesting alleged human rights abuses, protesters calling themselves "Electronic Brigade" opened a website that directs visitors to the main national police site.

"You are about to take part in an online direct action protest. Please confirm that you are willingly taking part in this action by clicking OK or exit without taking part by clicking Cancel," the message said.

The activists, who are not identified, said their brand of "hacktivism" was legal because it involved visiting a website only.

Police did not comment immediately, and it wasn't clear how many hits their website recorded.

The activists' website opens with a cartoon of the "Electronic Brigade" members dressed

as super heroes, wearing masks and caps.

A blurb accuses police of rampant human rights violations, including allegedly torturing 11 teenagers it said were wrongfully accused of being communist guerrillas. (See story in *Across the Nation*, Page A19.)

The 11 young people were arrested last month while on their way to the northern tourist town of Sagada, Mt. Province. Their lawyer, Pablito Sanidad, on Thursday asked a court in Benguet to free them from the provincial jail, saying they were arrested without warrants or probable cause.

Senior Supt. Villamor Bumanlag, the police chief of Benguet, earlier said the 11 youths were identified by government militiamen as communist guerrillas and denied they were tortured.

AP

This customs guard is a multi-millionaire

By Michelle V. Remo

THE DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE charged before the Office of the Ombudsman yesterday a security guard from the Bureau of Customs for failing the lifestyle check, saying he has accumulated millions of pesos in assets despite his meagre salary.

The Revenue Integrity Protection Services (RIPS), the unit of the DOF tasked with conducting lifestyle checks, said Raul "Along" Enriquez owns several pieces of real estate, including a two-story house in Pasig City.

Enriquez's salary as a security guard at the Naia Customs is only at P100,500 a year, or a P8,375 a month.

RIPS said its investigation team

found out that Enriquez owns, aside from the house, a 216-square-meter parcel of land, another 379-square-meter land in Maybunga, Pasig City, and a residential house and lot in San Nicholas, Pasig City. He also owns a 2005 model Ford Escape and a 2000 model Toyota Corolla. RIPS alleged.

The house, which RIPS said Enriquez bought in cash, was estimated to have a market value of P1.4 million. The 2005 model of Ford Escape costs around P1.4 million, while the 216-square-meter land is estimated to be at least P2 million.

RIPS failed to have an estimate of the cost of the 379-square-meter property and the residential house and lot, but said their costs run in the multimillion pesos.

Ex-solon's father dies

RICARDO PAULINO Cabochan of San Miguel, Bulacan, died on Wednesday. He is the father of former Bulacan Congressman Jose "Boji" Cabochan. His remains lie in state at the Mt. Carmel Church, New Manila, Quezon City. Cremation will be held after the 2:30 p.m. Mass at Mount Carmel Church on Sunday.

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20 officers recommended for court-martial-Esperon

From page A1

olation of three Articles of War—mutiny, failure to suppress a mutiny and conduct prejudicial to good order and military discipline.

Lim has denied the accusations. He has been relieved of his command of the elite First Scout Ranger Regiment and has been restricted to quarters since Feb. 24. This was after he and Marine Col. Ariel Querubin reportedly disclosed to Senga their plan to join anti-Arroyo rallies on Edsa and announce a withdrawal of support from the President.

That same day, Ms Arroyo, who has been hounded by allegations she stole the 2004 presidential election, declared a state national of emergency.

The 58-year-old President lifted her emergency decree a week later, saying she had quelled an attempt to unseat her by an alliance of communist guerrillas, rogue soldiers, opposition politicians and businessmen.

Lim, 50, a graduate of the US Military Academy at West Point, has been linked to previous coup attempts. In December 1989, Lim, then a captain, led rebel soldiers in taking over the Makati financial district in the bloodiest coup attempt against ex-President Corason Aquino.

Still, Lim's stock steadily grew. He received his star rank in April 2005, becoming one of the youngest officers to become a general.

Other officers probed

A number of Scout Ranger officers have either been detained or restricted to quarters while investigations are continuing on the coup attempt. They include Col. Nestor Flordeliza, Maj. Jason Aquino and Capt. Ruben Guinolbay.

Guinolbay was awarded the Gold Cross, the military's third highest combat award, for his exploits in the siege of Basilan against Abu Sayyaf insurgents in June 2001.

Querubin has not been restricted to quarters or investigated for the Feb. 24 plot.

He and other Marine officers are instead being investigated for the Feb. 26 standoff at their Fort Bonifacio headquarters. This was prompted by the sudden relief of Maj. Gen. Renato Miranda as Marine commander.

Bacarro said the rest of the 39 officers and 37 enlisted personnel could face administrative or criminal charges at the Army level. Administrative charges are tried before the Efficiency and Separation Board (ESB).

Other cases

"The rest of the officers and soldiers will be handled by the Army. They will be charged, but I can't say for now what the charges will be," Bacarro said.

On Saturday, Esperon announced that he had submitted his recommendation to Senga that Lim and several other officers be charged in a court-martial. Sources said 15 officers would be charged.

But during the 109th anniversary of the Philippine Army on Monday, Esperon said he had withheld submitting his recommendation due to additional information.

No deadline was set for Senga to act on the Army's recommendation.

Senga has so far not acted on the guilty verdict handed down by a court-martial on former chief comptroller, retired Maj. Gen. Carlos Garcia, in December last year.

Also pending action is a report submitted in January by a fact-finding board led by Navy chief Vice Adm. Mateo Mayuga on the "Hello Garci" election fraud scandal that implicated a number of top military officials.

Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita said that Defense Secretary Avelino Cruz would submit the Mayuga report to President Arroyo today.

Palace says ad plan won't 'choke' media

From page A1

ing a Communication Group under the Office of the President.

The group will "guide, integrate and supervise the public information activities, including advertisements, of all departments, bureaus, offices and agencies in the executive branch of government, including government financial institutions (GFIs) and government-owned and -controlled corporations (GOCCs)," the order said.

The Communication Group will be headed by Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye, with government media head Cerge Remonde and Philippine Information Agency Director General Conrado Limcaoco as members.

Bunye said Malacañang only wanted to "consolidate government information efforts to improve the public reach and penetration of key socioeconomic programs."

"Government advertising must be propelled by public interest and we should not mix it up with issues of press freedom. To impure suppression of press freedom relative to this effort is far out in the left field," Bunye said in a statement.

Big spenders

He said the sole purpose of the order was to organize and rationalize the public information programs of various government agencies in the executive branch, "no more, no less."

Senate Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel Jr. said centralizing ad spending, especially of GFIs and GOCCs, under the President could be used as a weapon to "choke" unfriendly media.

GFIs, such as the Social Security System and the Government Service and Insurance System, and GOCCs, like Pageor and PCSO, are among the biggest ad spenders in the country.

With national government agencies holding ad budgets running into hundreds of millions, the Palace has probably realized the power of money in influencing media, Conde said.

"This is certainly premeditated. It is trying its best to intimidate press and this can be used as a weapon," he said.

Conde said he feared that some small but critical newspapers would tone down critical stories because of the new order. "I wouldn't be surprised if many media outlets succumbed to pressure from Malacañang."

Ad boycott won't work

But Jake Macasaet of the Philippine Press Institute (PPI) said any attempt to threaten the media with an ad boycott would not work.

"To be fair, advertisers have the exclusive right to choose where to put their money. But this (EO 511) is using advertising clout to rein in the media. But it will never work," said Macasaet, who is also the publisher of Malaya.

He noted that the advertising budget of government agencies represented a minimal part of the ad revenues of newspapers.

"For a big newspaper like the INQUIRER, for example, the ad budget from the government is small. It will not be enough to put any paper, whether a small one like mine, down on its knees. This will have minimal effect on media but a negative effect on them (the government)," Macasaet said.

While he admitted that Malaya might lose money, "that will not change my mind about how rotten this administration is. I've been fair to them, but the damage [to government] is just too big."

Backlash

Vergel Santos of the Center for Media Freedom and Responsibility said EO 511 could be used as leverage by government in an attempt to get a "better press."

"It is a way of controlling as much of the market as it can. In a way, it will suffocate media," Santos said.

But he said the order could be counterproductive.

"This may also be the undoing of government," he said. "There will be a backlash. For example, a campaign against advertising in government media. I would call for that. It is a way we can counter that campaign."

Santos explained that the government should not even compete with private media in the first place by setting up its own media outfits.

Nothing sinister

Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita said there was nothing sinister about the consolidation of the government's advertising budgets under the Communication Group.

"There is no such thing (control of ad spending). Of course, we will give everyone the decision where they will advertise," Ermita told reporters.

He insisted that EO 511 was not related to Presidential Proclamation No. 1017, which vested Ms Arroyo with emergency powers for a week ostensibly to crush a coup plot against her.

"It's just incidental," said Ermita of the order's signing two weeks after PP 1017 was issued.

"Toting Bunye is just the overall coordinator of mass media activities so that what the left hand does, the right hand knows," he said.

Tribune's lampoon issue

Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez had said PP 1017 had a "sobering effect" on the media.

During the national emergency, police raided The Daily Tribune and Abante, the military sent soldiers to two private TV stations and the justice department filed charges against journalists.

Ermita said EO 511 was not an offshoot of the recent anniversary edition of The Daily Tribune in which the face of Ms Arroyo was superimposed on the face of a woman in a bikini.

He was surprised when he learned that one of the advertisers in the lampoon edition was the state-owned Land Bank of the Philippines.

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Solons ask DOJ to dismiss raps

By Armand N. Nocum

THE LAWYERS OF SIX PARTY-list representatives and another militant leader charged with rebellion in an alleged plot to topple President Macapagal-Arroyo demanded the dismissal of the case against them yesterday, saying it was "fatally defective" and backed by "voluminous, worthless documents."

State Prosecutor Emmanuel Velasco, who presided over the preliminary investigation of the legislators implicated in the alleged rightist-leftist plot to grab power which the government claims to have thwarted last Feb. 24, forced the police to bare their chief witness' face during the investigation on pain of having his testimony thrown out.

Velasco also rejected a demand by the six legislators—Representatives Rafael Mariano and Crispin Beltran of Anakpawis;

Representatives Satur Ocampo, Teddy Casiño and Joel Virador of Bayan Muna, and Rep. Liza Maza of Gabriela—that they be released from detention in the House of Representatives. He said they should bring the matter up to Philippine National Police Director General Arturo Lumibao or even the Supreme Court.

Lead counsel Romeo Capulong asked for the dismissal of the case on grounds that the complaint filed by the PNP had not been properly sworn and subscribed to, which he called a "very fatal mistake."

In addition, he said, a reading of the 482 pages of documentary evidence against the legislators showed they "all irrelevant and inadmissible."

Another militant implicated in the case is Vicente Ladlad, a member of Bayan Muna who is at large but was represented at yesterday's hearing by lawyer Jose Manuel I. Diokno.

Restive Mt. Bulusan settles down



MOUNT BULUSAN is calm hours after spewing ash.

NIÑO JESUS ORBETA FOR SOUTHERN LUSON BUREAU

SORSOGON CITY—RESTIVE Bulusan Volcano settled down hours after it spewed ash that sent residents of communities around it to panic.

According to the latest bulletin issued by the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology, the volcano registered a total of seven high frequency volcanic earthquakes, down from the 58 volcanic seismic events and four explosion-type volcanic earthquakes earlier recorded by its observatory station in Barangay Cabid-an here.

However, Phivolcs warned that more explosions could still occur in view of the volcano's recent reactivation.

Resident volcanologist Bella Tubianosa said Phivolcs was continuously monitoring seismic activities as well as visual signs from the volcano while awaiting results of the analysis of the ash samples sent to Manila. Bobby Labalan with a report from Niño Jesus Orbeta, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau.



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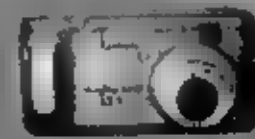
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End to debate

LAST YEAR, PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-ARROYO called for a "great debate" on amending the Constitution to begin. She suggested that the transformation of our system of government into a federal, unicameral and parliamentary system is the call of the times. Since each of these is a major change in itself, a great debate is, indeed, timely and necessary.

EDITORIAL Since then, however, what the nation has seen is a series of controlled situations meant to give the appearance of a debate. The President's own Constitutional Consultative Commission got bogged down in recriminations within the ranks which the mass distribution of the Presidential Medal of Merit could not soothe or dispel. Each major proposal has yet to be adequately debated: for example, the question of federalism hinges on whether it would be better to embark on the transition to formal federalism (and at what speed, and according to what criteria), or whether the same objective of achieving devolution to the provinces would be accomplished by more aggressively implementing the Local Government Code.

The debate on parliamentary government, too, remains haunted by suspicions that Ms Arroyo would use it to perpetuate herself in power or otherwise escape accountability for the various questions bounding both the legitimacy of her presidency and her governance. The current draft proposed by the House of Representatives also grants parliament the power to pick the date for the first election under a new charter—the kind of discretion that immediately inspires distrust.

The argument on the pros and cons of a unicameral legislature has been reduced to two sides of an ugly coin: either a Senate painted as incapable of thinking of the national interest by stubbornly resisting the House, or a House fanatically obsessed with destroying the Senate at all costs, when every reasonable interpretation of the Constitution clearly suggests that until and unless both Houses can agree to abolish one or the other, no abolition can take place.

With the great debate bogged down as it is, a disturbing trend of thought has emerged, which suggests that the way out of the impasse is to abandon debate and resort to the use of political machinery. Unofficially, administration officials have floated the possibility of harnessing local governments from the barangay to the provincial level to push forward a kind of people's initiative to propose only one thing, the abolition of the Senate. That's one amendment, which would result in a referendum, and if approved, the now unicameral National Assembly would then far more easily further amend or even completely rewrite the Constitution, and then submit it once more to a referendum. In both cases, the administration coalition thinks, after carefully considering its resources, it can win.

Such a victory would be proclaimed as a victory for democracy. Done quickly enough, it would also be a victory for unaccountability, since neither the President nor the House nor local government officials, would have to submit to the people's judgment through elections. In the first place, elections could be postponed until tempers cool; and with term limits abolished, incumbents who supported the President could use their clout and means to remain in office. The President would be safe from impeachment (her House majority will not evaporate overnight) and she could gain a new lease on political life as prime minister.

Such is the unease that this scheme, which remains unofficial and thus deniable, of course, has caused, that the barangay assemblies scheduled for tomorrow, Sunday and April 8 have taken on a sinister character. Could such assemblies, of which there are usually only two a year, signal the beginning of the administration drive to steamroll the Senate and the public into submission? And if so, what legal weight would they have?

The answer looks easy: Why, bring it to the Supreme Court. But so many important cases are still pending before the Court that adding another urgent question begging for early resolution would simply add to the backlog without clarifying anything.

What can we expect in the coming weeks? Ask the local officials who have begun gathering signatures. Ask the administration officials supervising them in turn. And ask the President if this is what she means by holding a great debate.

GMA policy toward 'jueteng' lords: Join them

ISN'T IT IRONIC THAT WHILE FORMER President Joseph Estrada is being tried for allegedly receiving kickbacks from *jueteng*, the person who grabbed the presidency from him is restoring the illegal numbers game under another name? The Small Town Lottery being pushed by the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office and Malacañang is the same dog with a different collar.

It has the same mechanics as *jueteng* (the only difference is that while *jueteng* has the numbers 1 to 38 to choose from, STL has numbers 1 to 40), the same *cobardes* to collect bets, and the same *cabos* to supervise the bet collectors. And the same *jueteng* lords to run the operation.

And isn't it also ironic that the anti-*jueteng* czar appointed by President Macapagal-Arroyo, Puerto Princessa Mayor Edward Hagedorn, is at the forefront of the push to propagate the illegal lottery?

If you can't lick them, join them. This seems to be the motto of the administration now.

The government has spent millions of pesos and buckets of saliva trying to give the impression that it is fighting *jueteng*, which has been denounced as evil by the Catholic Church and decent members of society. After so much pretending and publicity, the administration has decided to join the *jueteng* bandwagon. The administration and *jueteng* lords are now bedfellows, partners in crime. So that's why GMA has been visiting and charming the bishops.

While Malacañang claims that the coup plot against it has been foiled, it successfully carried out a coup of its own. Two of the President's running dogs, Interior Secretary Ronaldo Puno and Chief of Staff Michael Defensor, pulled the coup on Hagedorn. Puno and Defensor now run the STL, while Hagedorn, who made the preparations, has been left holding an empty bag. There is just so much money in STL that Palace factotums can't resist the temptation to dip their fingers in it.

It is significant that after the PCSO an-

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz



nounced the launching of the STL, Malacañang and the DILG, through Defensor and Puno, immediately suspended it, only to restore it less than 24 hours later, with the two of them serving as the top *jueteng* lords. Not only that, they gave the STL at least a one-year trial run, enough time to raise funds for the 2007 elections and Charter change.

The fact that Hagedorn and the PCSO have been preparing for and testing the STL for the last six months secretly is proof that they know what they are doing is not right, and that they don't want Malacañang to know for precisely the reason that the Palace coup was sprung: the Palace insiders want to be the new bosses of the now legal numbers game.

So is it "happy days are here again" for the *jueteng* lords (by the way, that was the theme song of the administration when Diosdado Macapagal, the ever-loving Daddy of GMA, won the presidency)?

Why would the *jueteng* lords not be happy? The PCSO is awarding franchises to private individuals or groups who would operate the STL in each town or province. Each operator must have at least a P10-million capitalization and has to deposit another P5 million with the PCSO. Who has that kind of money for such a shady enterprise but the *jueteng* lords? Besides, they have the experience and the manpower to run the reincarnated *jueteng*. So the *jueteng* lords, who have been violating the law for many years and got rich for it, have been made legal as the new franchise holders. They no longer have to bribe policemen, military officials and local and national government offi-

cials, and so their net income would be much bigger.

Not only that, they can still run their old illegal *jueteng*, using STL as camouflage. Their *cobardes* can pretend to collect bets for the legal STL but actually do it for the colorum operation. Or the colorum can offer more and bigger prizes, or accept lower bets (minimum bet for STL is 50 centavos; bettors can bet as little as 25 centavos in *jueteng*), or have more draws per day. Also, the franchise holders can cheat the government by underdeclaring the gross income for the day (the PCSO, local government units, and the police get varying percentages of the daily income). Thus, the government would lose money. Or, as in *jueteng* draws, they can cheat the bettors by making only the smallest bets win.

I plead guilty to giving the idea of a lottery run by local government units to replace *jueteng* to give jobs to the displaced *jueteng* workers who number in the millions. Because without alternative jobs, they would continue to work for the old *jueteng* lords, or worse, start peddling drugs. But I was against giving out franchises to private individuals because that would only reward the *jueteng* lords. They would corner the franchises, either by themselves or through dummies (the PCSO does not ban *jueteng* lords from getting franchises) and continue bribing policemen, military men, municipal employees and barangay officials.

My idea was to let the local government units run the STL, with the police, municipal officials and employees, barangay officials and even congressmen getting a percentage of the income. That way, the government men will work hard to fight *jueteng* because the lower the income going to STL, the smaller their share. Thus, they will resist the bribes offered by *jueteng* lords.

Moreover, I proposed that the draws should be held in public plazas with everybody watching so that there would be no cheating.

Why restrict the overseas Filipino professional?

"REGULATE THE EXODUS OF SKILLS AND talents! Keep the best and the brightest at home!" screamed the banner of a full-page, paid ad that appeared in the *Inquirer* the other day.

That call was issued by a group calling itself the Fair Trade Alliance (FTA). It asks that we regulate the migration of Filipino professionals and highly skilled workers.

I share their concerns, but not their conclusion. You can only control people's dreams at your own peril. Fair trade means that traders must be free to compete in the open market, and workers should be just as free to seek the highest value for their labor, locally or abroad. What is sauce for the capitalist goose should be sauce for the proletarian gander, even those whose labors are mental and not manual.

"Overseas employment, the nation's economic lifeline, is turning into its gravedigger." The figures indeed are staggering: 5 million overseas migrant workers and 3 million immigrants, sending remittances to support one-fourth of the population. The FTA wants that the continued outflow of talent has begun to "decimate [our] few but vital industries" and jeopardize basic services like health and education. The depletion of "mission-critical skills" has imperiled our hospitals, with a low nurse-to-patient ratio. And, most critical of all (and which may explain the full-page ad), our aviation industry has suffered from "foreign poaching" of trained pilots and aviation mechanics, and, in terms of investments in "experiential learning," the FTA estimates losses of P1 million for each piloted Filipino pilot and around P500,000 for each piloted mechanic.

The portents are scary indeed, but the remedies are just as worrisome. The FTA proposes the "arbitrary regulation of the outflow of critical skills and talents in crucial and strategic industries." That is technocrat talk for "Catch them at Naia." A National Service Act will restrict the migration of "mission-critical professionals," and require them to render some sort of compulsory community service for a few years.

PASSION FOR REASON

Raul C. Pangalangan



There is, to start with, a minor hitch known as the Bill of Rights, which ensures every Filipino's "right to travel." International human rights treaties speak of it as the "right to leave and to return," and the Supreme Court held that since the Constitution merely said "to travel," that excluded the "to return" part. Well, anyway, that's what it took to bar Ferdinand Marcos from returning to the Philippines. By whatever interpretation, the right "to travel" still includes the right "to leave," and that is the only part of the Bill of Rights that any aspiring Pinoy TNT cares about right now.

At best, then, any return-service requirement needs to be custom-tailored to the nation's needs. The period of compulsory service should be fixed and limited, and the covered professions must be confined solely to those truly in crisis.

However, if the problem is the drying up of the supply of professionals, then by all means let us increase the supply. If there is a shortage of nurses, let us open more nursing schools and train more nurses. After all, there are 84 million Filipinos; if even just 5 percent of us are of trainable age and competence, that's already 4 million skilled brains. And if there is real demand overseas for their God-given talents, let them go where those talents are justly remunerated.

Perhaps the real problem is our schools, and our attitude toward diplomas and degrees. Students learn fancy skills for non-existent jobs, and end up jobless or underemployed. They learn Shakespeare in the land of Pepe and Pilat. Either we match our schools' supply with the job market's demand, or we accept it as perfectly legitimate—as indeed it is—that college stu-

dents learn Shakespeare and then affect a mid-Western American accent in a call center.

I think the real fear is that to increase the supply of skilled brain workers, we must settle for the lesser brained, and that the only way to maintain quality control is to limit access to the professions. I firmly believe that we can democratize admissions without diluting academic standards. Having been a teacher for more than 20 years, I have no illusions about Filipino students. But I have no illusions, either, about admissions tests: maybe Albert Einstein might have flunked the UPCAT or the NMAT—he after all said that "imagination is more important than knowledge."

The FTA is correct that a return-service requirement should cover the societal investment in their education, but to enforce it by law would only create a class of bright but frustrated Filipinos chafing at their chains and hating the world, a perfect recruiting pool for terrorists and coup plotters.

But there is nothing to stop us from enforcing a return-service obligation, not by law, but by voluntary contract. For example, UP professors who are sent abroad on fellowships at UP's expense are tied down to a return-service requirement. By and large, professors have honored this obligation. There are some "Renegade Fellows," as they are officially called, but I trust that the university's lawyers diligently check on these deadbeat academics who have in effect run away with taxpayers' money.

This system of voluntary contracts must extend to UP's own graduates. Their education is heavily subsidized, but that subsidy is invisible. It leads to a sense of entitlement by the beneficiaries (indeed, a Darwinian sense of achievement that they beat others to the subsidy), and a lack of appreciation for the taxpayers who shouldered the true cost of their education.

It takes a village to raise a child. Then let the child know how much thanks he owes the village.

Comments to passionforreason@gmail.com

Duplicity of generals

ANALYSIS

Amando Doronila



THE NATION HAS NOT HEARD THE LAST WORD from Armed Forces Chief of Staff Gen. Generoso Senga. Speaking to members of the Philippine Constitution Association on Tuesday, Senga warned, "We have not seen the last of the attempts at power grab."

The warning was the most striking statement in his speech that also lanced the media, and the "deepening leftist-rightist alliance" that "will not be uprooted in a single stroke." He singled out the media for blame, saying that the AFP's effort to counter coups "is further made difficult by the propensity of certain sectors of media to romanticize erring officers and soldiers, portraying them as messianic figures that they are certainly not."

Notable is that Senga, who is not yet a messianic figure, glibly glossed over the incontrovertible fact that all the nearly one dozen coup attempts since 1986 were staged by his cohorts in the officer corps, and none by the Left or people-power driven movements. The media do not create military messiahs. Messianic figures have a fertile breeding ground in the military establishment that has developed the complex that soldiers are the agents of "national salvation." The media only discover messiahs.

What is striking is that since the aborted Feb. 24 coup, Senga has mounted not a coup but an offensive to set the national agenda and the themes of public debate. Between Feb. 24 and last Tuesday, he has delivered a series of speeches and public statements that tried to define the role of the Armed Forces as the guarantor of constitutional democracy and the protector of the state. In his new task of defining military intervention in the current political crisis of the Arroyo administration, Senga has been assisted by a gaggle of generals and colonels, including one who said, presumably with the blessings of Senga, that "we are one of the strong pillars holding the nation... if we break, the nation will collapse."

In this new rhetorical front of military interven-

tion in politics, this time using words as their weapon of mass subjugation, the generals have not only seized the initiative for agenda-setting from the President, Congress and the non-official votaries of public opinion, the media. They have also redefined the rules of democratic political action, as the constitutional mode for political change.

In this offensive, the soldiers have relegated the elected countervailing political institutions of democracy—chief among them, Congress—to the backseat. This intervention has set national policy on national security and reduced Congress to silence, making it a mere spectator of events fomented by the soldiers themselves.

Whether members of Congress were intimidated or not by the declaration of a national emergency, the fact is that congressmen and senators have supinely accepted the usurpation of their functions and have suddenly lost their ardor for investigations or privilege speeches denouncing corruption, abuse of power or breaches of constitutional guarantees.

The only noteworthy event in the Senate during the short-lived state of emergency was the acrimonious exchange between Senators Juan Ponce Enrile and Jambay Madrigal, in which Enrile came out with the dubious distinction of bullying a woman. The intramurals took place while the military and police were riding roughshod over the constitutional guarantees of freedom of assembly and speech in the enforcement of Presidential Proclamation 1017 and General Order No. 5.

The speeches and statements of Senga and other officers underlined the duplicity of the generals

in defining whether they were defending the constitutional precept of civilian supremacy over the military, the chain of command, or were promoting the agenda of their colleagues of establishing a military dictatorship. The statements were ambiguous on where the loyalty or the allegiance of the military leadership lay—whether with their comrades in arms implicated in the coup or their commander in chief. The statements were mendacious, full of double talk, leaving the public wondering where the military leadership stood during the crisis and doubting whether the officers were promoting their own agenda of grabbing power. The statements were a masterpiece of prevarication over the issue of military neutrality in political crises. They were hardly reassuring to the public and the civil society sector.

On March 8, Senga issued a five-point "guidance" on the role of the AFP "in these trying times." The guidance said, among others, "We are not to be regarded as a potent political force to be used by politicians in the furtherance of their vested interests." It added that "as mandated, we must remain apolitical."

But Senga skirted the issue. The danger lies not in their being used by "vested interests." It comes from the barracks. It comes from the increasing involvement of soldiers in plots to seize power without giving it back to the civilians. The last coup plot planned to install a "transition council"—a junta—to replace the government, if it had been ousted.

Despite the apparently innocuous wording of the guidance, Senga undermined the protestation of neutrality with his speech last Tuesday warning of "further coup attempts" resulting from continuing "plots of the Left and the Right." These plots provide the opportunities for further military interventions, in which it is uncertain where Senga will stand.

Senga, in effect, is laying the ground for open-ended intervention.

Peta comes home

I CAN'T REMEMBER THE TITLE OF THE FIRST PETA PLAY I saw, except that I found it particularly exciting that it was in "Tagalog." At that time, and maybe even to some extent today, Tagalog movies were seen as *hoi-polloi* and Tagalog plays, well, *excuse-me*, my friends would say, but let's go *naman* to watch something else. There was, and is, certainly no lack of local productions of Broadway musicals and American plays.

Peta (Philippine Educational Theater Association) as a maverick, started by Cecile Guidote-Alvarez in 1967. Swept up by the growing nationalism of the times, Peta dared to think, and to act, in Filipino. Through the years, it has produced more than 300 plays, mostly by Filipinos and in Filipino. Literally hundreds of Filipino theater people—directors (the most famous being Lino Brocka), performing artists, theater production staff—cut their teeth with Peta.

Peta brought the magic of theater, without the artificial glitter of our movie industry, to Filipinos of all ethnicities, of all classes. But as the "E" in its name implies, it also saw theater as educational. When you think about it, this isn't exactly a development from the 1960s. Traditional theater all over the world has always been educational in its own way, a way of instilling a society's values. But in the context of our own colonial past, theater also often questioned the political and social status quo. Vaudeville during the American colonial period was entertainment for the masses but was also often fiercely nationalistic.

Peta's plays would tackle burning political and social issues—they were quite bold even during the martial law era—but without becoming too preachy or propagandistic. Their plays had a way of linking a very specific issue, for example, overseas work, with wider issues. Ultimately, the popularity of Peta plays came with the way they offered us glimpses into our psyche, into our souls, allowing us to laugh, to weep, to rage, to stand proud.

And yet, Peta never really had a home.

Road warriors

Until a year or two ago, if you wanted to catch a Peta play, you'd call friends and suggest, "Let's go to Fort Santiago." Shortly after establishing Peta, Cecile was able to convince Teodoro Valencia to give them space in Fort Santiago. Leandro Locsin came in to transform one part of the fort into an open-air theater named after Rajah Sulayman. There, for years, from December to April, Peta would launch its plays.

I'm going to miss Rajah Sulayman's ambience, but I also saw its limitations. The theater season was limited to December through April, to avoid the rains, as well as the extreme summer heat. But even then, there were times when plays had to be canceled because of unexpected rains.

That was only part of the problem. Peta had to keep renting office space, moving 12 times over the last 39 years. I got to the point where I'd meet friends from Peta and my first question would be, "Where's your office now?"

There was a certain charm to all this, the idea of a band of free-spirited road warriors roaming the country, and later, the world, but there were limits to this nomadic existence. The last few years, Peta roped me in to help discuss gender and sexuality issues with their performers, and I never knew where I'd end up. One time Margie Holmes and I sat on the stage of a school auditorium, talking about vamps and virgins. That talk ended up with a rather risqué showcase presentation done in the school's courtyard, competing with an evangelica gathering next door.

Even nomads need a home, so Peta began its Theater Center project a few years back. I'm going to take a risk here by naming some names, knowing I'll inevitably miss out on many of those who worked hard. From the Peta end, there was Jack Yabut, who coordinated the project, backed by board chair Ramon del Rosario Jr., Peta president Cecilia Garrucha and executive director Beng Cabangon.

The diversity of donors reflected the way Peta appeals. There were European church organizations as well as local corporations; individual donors were as mixed, from Jose Mari Chan and Sen. Francis Pangilinan to former Philippine expats Rosalia Sciortino and O'ong Maryono.

Ideas

Last Saturday, Peta finally inaugurated its new home, a four-story glass, concrete and metal building, designed by Locsin Associates, standing high and proud on a 1,000-sq m lot on a street appropriately called Sunnyside in Quezon City. Inside are administrative offices, a Resource Center which I suspect will become a major documentation and archival center for Philippine theater, and lots of wide open spaces for brainstorming, rehearsals and for occasional side productions.

Filipinos are always ambivalent about concrete and glass buildings. We are attracted by the modernity, but we're also intimidated. You see that with malls. We love them, yet we have all kinds of urban legends about snakes in the dressing rooms, ghosts in the toilets.

Peta's concrete and glass building isn't that way. A few weeks back, Peta called me in to help with a Rockefeller-funded project to train theater people from the Mekong area (Thailand, Laos, Cambodia, Vietnam, China) to integrate theater and reproductive health education. Again, I facilitated a session sitting on the floor, but this time in a huge room that was Peta's own. As I spent the day with the Mekong theater people, I could feel the entire center pulsating with energy and life. Something seemed to be going on all the time in some part of the building. If this place has resident ghosts, they'll probably be friendly, maybe theatrical, ones. It's a warm place, a bit like cocoons, or wombs, where you can gestate ideas and ideals.

Red Box

When it's time, those ideas and ideals bear fruit, the birthing taking place in the theater, which Peta people call the Red Box. They've already used this for several plays, as well as a special presentation on the night of the inauguration.

I think of it as a huge little theater. It can take 400 people, which is quite a few people, but just about right for the intimacy that we had in Fort Santiago, appropriate to the kind of audience engagement that Peta plays are famous for.

It's also a theater that allows for tradition and modernity. For the inauguration, Peta had a retrospective that used a video flashed through an LCD projector, as well as live performances of songs from different plays. Oh, but songs do trigger nostalgia, with particular styles we had to learn to associate with particular composers like Louie Pascales and Lut Labad (now based in Bohol, but who flew in for the inauguration). I'm hoping Peta records these songs for future generations of Filipinos.

The center's going to be busy this summer, with the usual rounds of workshops for young people. (Call 721-8604, 725-6244 for their summer workshop offerings.) But this time, when the rains come, they'll actually open a new theater season. I'll miss Fort Santiago, but I look forward to the new season as Peta finally comes home.

PINOY KASI

Michael L. Tan



'I'm sorry Mother Earth'

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David



A "MEA CULPA" COUNTDOWN IS HOW THE Earth Day Network Philippines has billed the month-long run-up to the celebration of Earth Day on April 22. "Do you know what mea culpa means?" asked the Network's Odette Alcantara in her keynote talk at the Countdown's launching last Wednesday. "It means 'I'm sorry.' Because when we look at the state of the environment today, we must realize that we are all at fault."

The Countdown was launched with a cultural presentation called "Panaghoay at Panata kay Inang Kalikasan (Lamentation and Vow to Mother Nature)" at the Amphitheater of the Bantayog ng mga Bayani. Part of the "lamentation" was a tribute to the women, many of them members of Abansel Pinay holding a meeting to plan, among other things, their activities for Women's Month, of Barangay Guinsaugon and nearby barangays of St. Bernard, Southern Leyte. With their neighbors and families, all of them died when earth and rocks, loosened from the mountainside by days of continuous rain, slid and fell in a deadly landslide that buried their village.

The lamentation was thus a tribute to the women's unity and dedication to their cause—which was the welfare of their community and their rights as women. And they died as martyrs to another cause near to the hearts of women: the environment.

Opinions are divided on what caused the landslide. Was it the denuded mountainsides, planted over with shallow-rooted coconut trees in place of the virgin forest? Or was it simply the location of Barangay Guinsaugon at the foot of a mountain whose treacherous slope had already led authorities to identify the area as a geo-hazard spot?

Whatever the cause, with their passing, our sisters in Guinsaugon have opened our eyes to our vulnerability to natural disasters and to the consequences of our indifference to the damage being done to the environment. Mea culpa indeed!

ODETTE, "Mother Earth herself" as we teased her, had a code word for all environmentalists: LAHAT, for "lupa, araw, hangin, ako at tubig (earth, sun, wind, me and water)."

To cite a mantra of environmentalists: We are

all connected. We are all linked. Nothing happens on this earth that will not, somehow, affect us and leave an imprint on us. And "lahat," said Odette, means each of us, every *ako*, is responsible for everything in our environment, because everything we do, after all, affects our soil, our water sources and the very air we breathe.

Bebet Gozun, former environment secretary and chair of Earth Day Network Philippines, underscored Odette's message in her closing remarks, noting how every stage of human life, every minute of our day entails interacting with our environment. "So each time you throw something away, each time you wash your hands, each time you flush the toilet, think about your own personal contribution to solid waste management and to the contamination of our bodies of water."

AMONG THE FEATURED performers at the Countdown launch were Mascomthea, a community drama troupe of the Sagip Pasig Movement based in Sta. Ana trained by stage, film and TV performer Lou Veloso. They presented tableaux commentaries on environmental issues, with background music provided by "musical" instruments from recycled containers, bottles and tins, and burlap fashioned from scrap metal.

Joining Mascomthea was Womenspace, a group of three women backed up by a band of alternative musicians, who through song, poetry and dance led the "lamentation" for the women of Guinsaugon as well as the more celebratory community dancing at the close of the occasion.

Earth Day will be observed on April 22 with a slew of activities, with Earth Day Network Philip-

pines leading the observance with a Mass and "environmental liturgy" at Smokey Mountain, a rehabilitated open dump that was once a symbol of poverty in this country and now a center of environmental education and community activity.

I WAS supposed to read the names of the women of Guinsaugon who perished in the landslide, but due to miscommunication, I wasn't able to bring the list with me. Here are some of the names of the members of the Guinsaugon Women's Health Organization, all of them confirmed dead or listed as missing. I will write the rest of the names in tomorrow's column. Your prayers and remembrance will be highly appreciated.

Elvira Esclavosa, Alma Arbio, Prescyl Mesa, Anacita Auremary Gemintiza, Jocelyn Sajol, Joylita Bolasco, Anella Mundano, Gloria Libaton, Jerilyn Pagulong, Fely Ichon, Arlyn Velasco, Leonarda Elmonora, Myrna Gramaticio, Jacinta Libaton, Trinidad Coquilla, Alma Sibunga, Maureen Inso, Rosell Libaton, Narcisa Japson, Eva Renu.

Prima Punio, Creselda Bolamio, Basiledes Orbezo, Marissa Ybanez, Rosalita Omela, Cristina Arbiol, Jorgina Omela, Porferia Libaton, Evelyn, Bolasco, Simplicia Lisondra, Sherlita Pia, Visminda Bolasco, Anecita Cawaling, Aurora Pia, Lydia Peligro, Rayda Manatac, Zenaida Libaton, Jocelyn Pia, Rosita Coquilla, Teofanes Casera, Absalon Libaton.

Marivic Pelesco, Roberto Peligro, Marilou Laderas, Estrella Bulagsac, Marclana Credo, Rosalia Libaton, Rosario Siega, Saturnina Bacala, Victoria Omela, Anecita Coquilla, Arlyn Baylan, Teodora Siega, Allyn Daohog, Marilou Laderas, Milagros Garcia, Ma. Teresa Marsada, Anabel Paler, Cecilia Naparuta, Mary Jane Libaton, Vivian Patual.

Laurencia Danduan, Melanie Coquilla, Julia Montibon, Virgie Mondano, Dolores Coquilla, Deolita Siega, Anita Denden, Myrna Libaton, Mary Ann Estafila, Joan Coquilla, Liza Baylan, Marilyn Coquilla, Jenefer Ocon, Loreta Numeron, Anecita Duhiling, Pila Maca, Saviena Estafila, Anita Tinko, Edoneda Esqueria, Elena Terante, Leonora Lego.

Liberation from history

LOOKING BACK

Ambeth R. Ocampo



HISTORY OFTEN SEEMS SO Distant, so far away to be of use in our daily lives. This is why I require my students to dig up and read the newspapers that came out on the day they were born. Without prodding, the students see parallels between the past and the present and realize, sadly, that the world has not changed very much in the past two decades.

If they are diligent, they can go back 200 or 2,000 years and still see similarities. It seems we have not learned anything from history at all, and that is a very depressing thought indeed. It is one thing to know the past, but knowing what to do with it is something else. Our aim should be to be liberated from our history.

For the past two weeks, I have been sorting out the books that have overgrown my bookshelves, files that have outgrown the boxes and filing cabinets where they were planted years ago. I have so much material in storage that I do not have to go out and do research in a library or archive to write this column, but the thrill is in the chase. Once you have found what you are looking for, you search for something else.

On day, I found a bundle of 3" x 5" index cards that was standard issue for research in the last century. Today, we have laptops, palm tops, cell phones and other handy devices that make life much easier but do not replace the actual hands-on research work.

I have dug up a whole pile of notes from the 1926 Philippines Free Press and this made some very engaging reading. Old news were still current.

There is an ongoing hunt for that school teacher who punished her students by forcing them to eat pencil shavings. This would not have been noticed, except that one of the children died. So much for corporal punishment. In 1926, Lizardo Yumul, a principal from Concepcion, Tulae, conducted a survey where 265 of the 700 pupils who answered a questionnaire said they had been whipped. All the 132 primary school students opposed corporal

punishment. When asked to explain why, their answer was simple and direct to the point: "It hurts!"

In the intermediate grades, 89 said they had experienced corporal punishment. But while 64 opposed corporal punishment, 23 accepted it as atonement for a wrong done, and 46 even said the pain would make them better! The 64 who opposed corporal punishment explained their position as follows: 30 said, "It hurts"; 18 said, "I didn't do anything to warrant the rod"; six respondents said the punishment made them angry; five disagreed with being whipped, and five cried injustice.

One wonders how students today would answer the same questionnaire, but an interesting question Yumul asked was: "If you are stronger (and bigger), what will you do to a parent who whipped you?" A total of 80 students said they would run away from home; four said they would become naughty to get even, three said they would refuse to do [household and school] work (and chores), three said they would get angry; three would refuse to eat; and two would apologize. It is significant to note that two respondents said they would apologize for their wrongdoing and 47 would actually be sorry for any wrong they had done. On the other hand, 58 said they would patiently endure the pain while 41 said they would try to please the parent who spanked them.

Many Filipinos today are not in favor of corporal punishment anymore, and it seems we have relaxed on many things as well, especially sex. However, there is a group of self-proclaimed guardians of morality who are now reacting and bawling the

MTRCB for approving the films "Brokeback Mountain" and "Munich." I have not seen either film, so I will reserve comment for later, but this kind of thinking goes all the way back to 1926 when there was a moral crusade against "kissing." At the time, it was popular to wear an inverted question mark formed from a lock of hair on the forehead of women called the "kiss-me lock." It was described as a modern-day midget, and guardians of morality were against it. Generoso Ruiz wrote a letter to the Philippines Free Press wailing:

"...[W]here have you seen in this God's country of ours a typical Filipina over whom Rizal and Luna went into raptures, allowing herself to be kissed by her lover publicly, or even privately, by the light of the silver moon?"

"...[T]he Filipino girl's modesty and coyness forbids such extravagances. Possibly among forward Filipino girls, who have aped modern-imported customs. Those of the demimonde class, where the last vestige of Filipino maidenhood and purity has fallen and given way to the power of jazz and jazz-made customs, such kissing scenes may be found, perhaps. But these Filipino girls, mind you, are not the typical Filipino girls I refer to. The rouged and bobbed-haired girls are an anachronism in our Philippine life—a part of the deluge progress has brought to the Filipinos, something that reminds you of the Spanish saying, 'no hay mal que por bien no venga.'"

[W]e may have woman suffrage in this country, which is another evil brought by progress, we may have bobbed-hair and jazz, but for heaven's sake, let us not parade before the public promiscuous scenes with kissing in them that are not true to life."

One can only guess what planet Mr. Ruiz came from. History, at least, shows us that we have progressed in many ways.

Comments are welcome at ocampo@ateneo.edu

Repression begets revolution

THE ARREST OF OUR CHAIRPERSON, Rosa Montiveros-Baraquel, demonstrates the continuing harassment of progressive legislators and individuals by the immoral and illegal administration of Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo. The arrest is evidence of the Arroyo regime's unrelenting assault on the democratic ideals of the Filipino people with or without 1017 Ms Arroyo has simply no respect for our freedom and human rights.

We are also appalled by the barbaric way that the authorities man-

handled our chairperson. According to our leaders, she was dragged, pulled and shoved by policewomen in civilian clothes. It is unfortunate that this barbaric act was committed by policewomen on the very day marking International Women's Day. But we cannot blame them. We know they are just implementing orders from the country's No. 1 human rights violator—President Arroyo.

There is no doubt that the Arroyo-spearheaded repression will intensify in the days to come, but

the Filipino people will not be cowed. We can feel the anger rising among us. It is brewing. History has shown that repression begets revolt. The Filipino people will prevail.

—ROY CALPOFORO,
secretary general,
Pundasyon para sa
Sosyalistang Pilipinas,
Room 207,
Center for Community Services,
Social Development Complex,
Ateneo de Manila University,
Loyola Heights, Quezon City

Front page for bad news, inside page for good news

I COULD NOT HELP BUT NOTICE HOW the INQUIRER treats news concerning Meralco. The broadsheet usually publishes bad news about Meralco (like power rate increases) on its front pages, even bannerizing them at times.

But last March 14, the INQUIRER chose to print the news story about Meralco's power rate reductions on Page A-13 of its first section, where fewer people could see and read it. Why the double standard?

In contrast, another major daily printed a similar story on its front page, thereby enabling even the passersby at newsstands and other busy people to immediately know that they will soon be paying less for their elec-

trical consumption.

Is the INQUIRER afraid that this will considerably lessen the "anger" that the public feels toward Meralco? The kind of public anger that the INQUIRER and its broadcast affiliate have been trying to instill in people's hearts and minds, because Meralco is an affiliate company of broadcast giant ABS-CBN?

—ROLLY CRUZ,
rollycruz2003@yahoo.com

Impact on people's lives is one of the criteria INQUIRER editors consider in choosing stories for the front page. Like, for instance, the Supreme Court ordering Meralco to refund its customers billions of pesos in excess billings of the utility. Or

the increase in the electric bills of consumers due to the controversial purchase power agreements that Meralco had entered into with affiliated independent power producers. So, how about Meralco's recent move to reduce by 8.5-centavos/kWh the average cost of electricity it charges its customers? That's not even a 2-percent reduction in the cost per kWh for Meralco customers. Still, the editors decided to publish that particular item on an inside news page.

Stories land on the front page because editors consider them highly important for readers to know so that they can make informed choices and decisions. And not because these will hurt or please a powerful family or business interest.—Ed.

LETTERS

GMA's god

THIS IS IN REACTION TO THE claim of Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo that "It's God's plan I'm here." (PDI 3/8/06) I respect her freedom to express her beliefs, but I'm wondering who was the God she was referring to. I am sure that her god cannot be the God of truth and justice; her god can't be the God who wants to ease the suffering of His people.

If GMA is truly a faithful follower of God, why does she continue to ignore the appeal of the bishops and the people for the relentless pursuit of the truth behind the Hello Garci tapes?

God's commandment is to love God and the least among our brethren. How come that GMA, who often uses the name of God, has no qualms about implementing policies that make our poor people poorer? Hence, I ask GMA, who is your God?

Proclamation 1017 has clearly led to the curtailment of our civil and political rights. It showed GMA's Marcosian, fascist and oppressive tendencies.

I plead with GMA. Please stop using the name of God to deceive people.

—GILBERT S. BILLENA,
seminarian, Order of Carmelites,
22 Anahaw St., Gloria 3 Subd.,
Culiat, Tandang Sora, Quezon City

First woman Cabinet member

THIS REFERS TO THE NEWS STORY "Fantastic role model, trailblazer, buried today" (PDI, 3/10/06) which cited Estefania Aldaba-Lim as the first woman Cabinet member.

However, in the INQUIRER's Jan. 7 issue, the editorial, titled "Ladies first," stated that (the late) Asun-

cion Arriola-Perez (my mother) was the first woman Cabinet secretary.

The error is grievous and ought to be corrected in order to spare the two families from further embarrassment.

—ERNESTO PEREZ,
eperez553@yahoo.com

A call to all educators and students

NEAL H. CRUZ'S OPENING STATEMENT in his Feb. 27 column best describes our feelings: "Wasn't it sad and ironic that on the very day that we were commemorating the 20th anniversary of Edsa I, that shining moment in our history when we broke the chains of a dictator, another dictator would emerge and put us back in chains, virtually bringing us back to those dark days of martial law?"

Many educators and youth leaders were at the forefront of the anti-martial law struggle. They are now being called upon once more to defend our democratic way of life in the face of very alarming, recent developments.

We join the nation's moral outrage against the arrest of Prof. Randy David and five party-list representatives. We condemn the raid on and takeover of The Daily Tribune.

It is dangerous when military officials are made—and assume the role of—the final arbiter of

what is a seditious news report. The core values of democratic governance are being disregarded and trampled upon. Truth and the freedom of speech, press and assembly are being violated to ensure the political survival of the tenant in Malacañang. Except for Ferdinand Marcos, no other leader has wreaked more harm on our democratic institutions than Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo. With just one proclamation, GMA set back the national effort to educate the youth on the responsibilities of citizenship.

For educators and students, it cannot be "business as usual" even if Proclamation 1017 has been lifted. We echo the response of Conrado de Quiros (PDI, 2/27/06) "Protest. Defy. Fight back." We will do our share to defend our democratic way of life. This shall be our lasting legacy to the next generation.

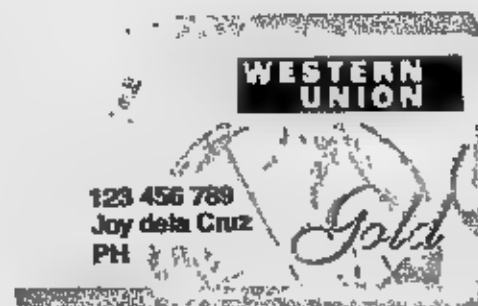
—RENE C. ROMERO,
Philippine Normal University,
Taft Avenue, Manila

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Back to basics

TWO OPTIONS: WE EITHER DO SOMETHING, or we shut up and just go back to work.

What can we do? Here are a few simple and feasible steps. We should go out of our way, and way beyond our comfort zones. We can organize ourselves and set up interest groups. Or we can set up programs that address social needs and not completely rely on the government. People in Payatas, for example, set up Pantalanang Pantao to augment education needs in the area and in support of the public schools there.

We can fund charities. Filipinos abroad do this a lot. They organize themselves and adopt their respective hometowns.

In the end, all of us must be held accountable.—Alain Ampungan (via e-mail)

VOICES ON INQ7.NET

I understand it is quite frustrating to have all this massive corruption, but unfortunately 94 million Filipinos allow it to happen.

As an individual, all I can do is help my fellow citizens/families as an overseas Filipino worker (OFW). OFWs do it with huge sacrifices, because of opportunities abroad and the lack of them locally.

Perhaps, OFWs should get together and overthrow the government. Even basic fundamentals and ethics are corrupted and violated. Meanwhile, here are the OFWs working early and late hours to be able to send money home, because of the shortcomings in the home country.—James Lorenzana (via e-mail)

Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's track record:

1. The Philippines became the No. 2 most corrupt country during her "honest" administration.

2. Her declaration of a state of national emergency confirmed the suspicion of many that she wants to cover up her various sins to the Filipino people.

3. She is an expert in the economics of cheating, stealing, lying, corruption, etc.

4. Her objective in declaring a state of national emergency is to keep the people away from the truth, from a full accounting of the billions she has withdrawn from the national treasury.

5. She should be inducted into the Hall of Fame for Lying and Corruption.—Bing Eng Rich, New York (via e-mail)

Whatever happened to the olden days, when national interest was on top of a political party's agenda? When people supported their governments? When revolution was the "right thing" to do? When democracy actually worked?

You know why it was simpler during Edsa I? Everyone had a common cause: to oust Marcos and to see the progress of the country. It was a huge objective, and everyone shared it, with a sense of newfound nationalism.

Nowadays, people still have that same goal. However, things have been muddled by different points of view on how to achieve it. A combination of politics, self-interest and lack of synergy has been the biggest enemy of progress.

If only people would put down their protest signs, keep their rifles, and the government would loosen its reins and open its ears, maybe we'll get a little closer to some kind of enlightenment.—Eric Oandasan, California (via e-mail)

As the Philippines is in great turmoil, I give my strong support to our President. The President is in a position to order the arrest of those party-list congressmen. First, they are not real congressmen. They used to be out in the streets, holding red banners and flags representing communism. Second, those congressmen don't know the law. They are just using people's money, and for what? To criticize the government. They are not working as congressmen.—Menong Mateo, Guam (via e-mail)

Cha-cha gets going today

From page A1

Gathering signatures during the assemblies is the best option, as it will "ensure that these signatures are not manufactured or fabricated," the governor said.

Petilla disclosed that he gave P3,000 in "mobilization fund" to each of the province's more than 1,400 barangay chairs so they could muster the needed signatures. "The funds would come under our provincial aid to the barangays," he said.

At the national directorate meeting of the ruling Lakas party in January, President Macapagal-Arroyo pushed for a new Constitution and a parliamentary system by the middle of the year.

The Lakas national directorate rejected former President Fidel Ramos' proposal that Ms Arroyo cut short her term in 2007 to pave the way for a parliamentary government.

At the meeting, Speaker Jose de Venecia proposed a French-style transition parliamentary government under which Ms Arroyo would remain President but share some of her powers with a prime minister who would be the chief operating officer.

Lakas members also wanted to extend the terms of elected officials.

Out of this world

Besides the people's initiative, Malacañang is pushing for Con-Ass, according to maverick administration Sen. Joker Arroyo.

"This kind of a drive, they're all out of this world," the senator said at a briefing, referring to the twin moves.

"They want to amend the Constitution to stay in power and prolong their terms. It's not really because they want that a change in the Constitution would be better for the country. That's a lot of wishful thinking," he said.

He said the two-pronged approach to amend the Constitution were acts of desperation that would be challenged before the Supreme Court.

Arroyo predicted that allies of the President would press ahead with these two initiatives despite knowing that these would not get past both chambers of Congress.

He argued that the House of Representatives could not go it alone, convene Congress into a Con-Ass and amend the Charter without the Senate participation.

He said the senators unanimously adopted a resolution serving notice to their counterparts in the House that any amendment to the Constitution required the approval of both the Senate and the House.

In the case of the people's initiative, the senator pointed out that the high tribunal had ruled that the law supporting such an initiative was inadequate.

Legality doubtful

Congress passed Republic Act No. 6735, which provides for people's initiative, but only on laws passed by Congress and by local government units.

Majority Leader Francis Pangilinan, for his part, said that the people's initiative was of "doubtful legality," pointing out that people's initiative was available only to the people, not the government, and was designed to amend, not revise the Charter.

"In the end, I said these would be resolved by the SC," Arroyo said, pointing out that civic and non-organizations would surely question these before the high tribunal.

Five party-list representatives see something sinister about the barangay assemblies.

"A silent, sinister, illegal and unconstitutional people's initiative is on the move. It is organized

by Malacañang through the DILG and the government foisted various perks—including term extension and the (release of the) internal revenue allotment—on local government officials to get their support," Akbayan Representatives Loretta Ann Rosales, Risa Baraquel and Mario Aguja, Anak Mindanao Rep. Mujiv Hataman and Partido ng Manggagawa Rep. Rene Magtuto said in a joint statement.

Interior Secretary Ronaldo Puno saw nothing wrong with the convening of the assemblies.

"Anybody can speak and make presentations before these barangay assemblies. If they want, they can also make presentations against Charter change (Cha-cha)," Puno said.

Barangay assemblies are annual events in which communities get together to discuss issues confronting them.

Puno said the initiatives were being pushed by local government groups. "The department has nothing to do with them," he said.

Memo from Gonzalez

The party-list representatives said that aside from the memorandum, the DILG distributed the following:

- A memorandum from Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez to Speaker Jose de Venecia dated Jan. 24, 2006, saying that it is legal for officers and members of the civil service and public officials to campaign for Charter change.
- An instruction to verify the signatures gathered vis-à-vis the list of registered voters.
- A matrix explaining the differences between parliamentary and presidential forms of government.

• A sample format of the form for people's initiative, which includes the proposition for Charter change.

• A list of barangays per municipality with the total number of registered voters and the corresponding minimum percentage of voters that the signature campaign must obtain.

• A draft Commission on Elections petition proposing amendments to the 1987 Constitution through a people's initiative.

"That this is being done surreptitiously, in careful details and with blatant use of government resources and machinery reveals the desperation and bankruptcy of the Arroyo administration's Charter change agenda," the party-list lawmakers said.

"It proves once again that faced with a daunting opposition to the Cha-cha in the Senate, the government is willing to mangle the law and contort the Constitution in order to push for their agenda," they said.

The Promotion of Church People's Response in Negros Occidental asked the public to boycott the barangay assemblies.

The PCPR said the public should be wary of the intention of the organizers because De Venecia announced on Monday that the people's initiative for Charter change would be launched nationwide on Saturday.

Fr Romeo Tagud, PCPR-Negros secretary general, said the people should be vigilant and oppose any ploy to extend Ms Arroyo's stay in power.

"With Charter change through a people's initiative the planned impeachment of Ms Arroyo by the opposition will be preempted. There will be no national election and she will stay in power in spite of questions on the legitimacy of her presidency," Tagud said.

Sample questions

In Camarines Sur, the Union of Local Authorities of the Philippines (Ulap) started gathering signatures for Charter change early this week.

Baao Mayor Mel Gaité, local president of the League of Municipalities in the Philippines, said Ulap was targeting 20 percent of the registered voters to sign on the petition form distributed to barangay chiefs on Tuesday.

A copy of the petition obtained by the Inquirer contained items like province, legislative district, city/municipality, barangay, name and precinct number of the voter, address, birth date, signature and a space for verification.

One question reads: "Do you approve the amendment [to] Articles VI and VII of the 1987 Constitution, changing the form of government from the present bicameral-presidential to a unicameral-parliamentary system of government, in order to achieve greater efficiency, simplicity and economy in government and providing an Article XVIII as transitory provisions for the orderly shift from one system to another?"

Right below the proposition, the voter is enjoined to approve the proposed amendment coupled with the attestation that the voter's signature signified approval of the proposal.

"My signature herein, which shall form part of the petition for initiative to amend the Constitution, signifies my support thereof," said the concluding portion of the petition form.

Gaité said that upon the completion of the signature campaign, the accomplished petition forms would be sent to the Ulap secretariat.

Plebiscite in June

Gaité said the national plebiscite on the proposed constitutional amendments was planned to be conducted in June.

The DILG office in Eastern Visayas denied it had a hand in the signature campaign.

"Our participation is only to monitor the holding of the assembly by these barangays. Now, this reported signature campaign during the assembly is initiated by the local officials and not by the DILG," William Paley, DILG-8 chief, said.

Evelyn Trompeta, DILG director for Western Visayas, said the barangay assemblies set on Saturday were to discuss the "people's concerns as provided in the Local Government Code."

"There are no specific instructions to tackle Charter change, but it can be tackled if barangay officials feel it is a concern of their community," she said.

Commission on Election officials in Negros Occidental, however, revealed that the DILG had asked them for the lists of voters, in apparent preparation for the campaign for signatures needed for the Cha-cha people's initiative.

With reports from TJ Burgonio in Manila and Carla P. Gomes, PDI Visayas Bureau

Teacher in GenSan ...

From page A1

Elizabeth Romano, principal of the New Mabuhay Elementary School in General Santos City, told reporters she was investigating a complaint filed by a number of parents against the Grade 6 teacher, Susana Quiambao.

In renewing the warning against unusual punishment, the DepEd also announced it had suspended and brought administrative charges against a teacher in connection with the death of a Grade 2 pupil allegedly forced to eat pencil shavings.

The DepEd said Brenda Elambuena, a Grade 2 teacher at the Silangan Elementary School in Taguig, had been suspended for at least 90 days as she undergoes administrative proceedings on a charge of grave misconduct in the death of 9-year-old Delmar Redota. She faces dismissal if found guilty.

The girl died on March 15, one week after Elambuena allegedly forced her and another pupil to eat pencil shavings which the girls had reportedly scattered while the teacher was sweeping her classroom's floor.

While the other girl faked eating the shavings, Redota swallowed them, the girl's mother told the Inquirer.

Undressing

One of the complainants in General Santos City protested that Quiambao's methods had forced her niece to drop out of class after being made to take off her blouse, exposing her breasts.

Quiambao admitted to reporters that a number of students who had done poorly in recent exams had indeed undressed in front of the class—the boys removing their pants and the girls taking off their blouses. But she claimed the students did so voluntarily.

"They did it on their own volition," Quiambao said.

She said the issue had been blown out of proportion by the parents because the punishment had been agreed on by the class. She claimed it was even educational "because the students appeared like they were just doing a fashion show."

In their complaint, the parents said the punishment had caused their children

emotional distress.

In her warning to school officials, Hidalgo said teachers who inflicted severe and harmful punishment on their pupils could face administrative and criminal charges.

"There is no excuse for enforcing cruel and harmful punishment no matter what the child's offense is. I, therefore, ask our teachers to be wary about child abuse and coercion in the classroom. Every teacher should first and foremost ensure the welfare and development of our children to equip them with values such as patience, tolerance and respect for others and we should be their models," Hidalgo said in a statement.

She reiterated the DepEd's policy against the use of corporal punishment in schools.

Cruel punishment

Hidalgo cited DepEd Order No. 92, issued in 1992, which prohibited the use of corporal, cruel and physically harmful punishment against any pupil.

On the other hand, the order said school officials and teachers had the right to impose "appropriate and reasonable disciplinary measures" in case of minor offenses and infractions of good discipline.

"School officials or teachers who are caught violating this order can be charged not only administratively but also criminally. DepEd will not hesitate to impose sanctions and file charges against those who commit abuse against our students," Hidalgo said.

She also appealed to students "to behave well because your teachers work so hard even after office hours to give you better education."

Report to DepEd

The DepEd chief also encouraged pupils and their parents to report policy violations and abuses directly to the DepEd's DTXT Action Center by texting DEPED FDBK to 2622 or through their hotline (02) 636-1663.

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Filipino singer ...

From page A1

performed. He said he knew he had connected with the audience and with his band. He was able to get them hooked from the beginning. He wasn't consumed by nervousness and anxiety because he really enjoyed performing. At a certain point, he said he was in a trance.

Only Asian

David was the only Asian among the 12 who made it to the finals. (At the March 18 semis, he sang "Waltz for Debby," "No More Blues" and "Skylark.")

He outdid Dan Barnett and Katie Bruce of Australia, Torsten Goods of Germany, and Heidi Martin and Alison Wedding of the United States.

The finalists were scored on intonation, jazz vocal sound, time feel, interpretation and phrasing, innovation concept, improvisation and convincing stage presence.

The judges included Lee Gibson and Tina May, described as "two of Britain's finest jazz vocalists and educators," LJC executive director Ursula Malewski, jazz vocalist Jan Shaw, and Pete Churchill and Adam Sieff, jazz consultants with Sony BMG Music International, Dune Records and DDE Records.

According to the LJC, the contestants from Britain, Armenia, Austria, Australia, Azerbaijan, Belgium, Canada, Croatia, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Netherlands, New Zealand, the Philippines, Poland, Russia, Spain, Switzerland, Turkey, Ukraine and the United States were of "an exceptionally high and professional standard."

Revival advocate

David, who is due to return to the Philippines on April 5, is expected to get a grand welcome in Pampanga where he is an advocate of Kapampangan culture revival, according to Robby Tandingan, director of the Center for Kapampangan Studies of the Holy Angel University.

A recipient of the 2004 Most Outstanding Kapampangan Award (in the arts, culture and music), David supported the revival of folk songs recorded in musical compact discs by the Crisost Foundation, AniSta Rita Foundation and the center, and their inclusion in his recordings and concerts.

Smart Communications president Manny V Pangilinan helped fund David's trip to London.

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STL licenses went to 'jueteng' lords?

CAMP OLIVAS, PAMPANGA—SUSPECTED JUE-teng lord Rodolfo "Bong" Pineda has reportedly obtained the license to operate the state-run Small Town Lottery (STL) in Angeles City, north of here, a police source said.

The source also said Pineda has applied for a license to operate the STL in the rest of Pampanga.

The source identified Pineda as one of the owners of the Lake Tahoe Gaming Corp. (LTGC), which got the license. His co-

owner is a top local official in Angeles City, the source added.

Senior Supt. Policarpio Segubre, Angeles City police director, on Thursday confirmed that LTGC has been operating the STL for two weeks now.

But he said he did not know who owned the company. He said he got from the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office a certification that LTGC got a license. It had the approval of PCSO chief Rosario Unate, he said.

Romualdo Quiones, chief of the PCSO's STL project management office in Manila, said the names of Pineda and the local official were "not listed" in the LTGC corporate documents.

In a phone interview, Quiones said the PCSO gave the company

a license to act as an "agent corporation" and not a franchise, which only Congress could give.

The close relative of Pineda in Lubao, Pampanga, did not return calls to confirm or deny Pineda's alleged stake in the company.

Another police source surmised that Pineda's name was being "floated" to "encourage" bettors to try the STL.

Although similar to jueteng in that two numbers are chosen for the winning combination, STL has not drawn a strong following,

two former jueteng cobradores (collectors)-turned-STL sales agents in Angeles City said.

Quiones said the Sun Cove Corp. got the license to run the STL in Pampanga. The license to run the game in Bataan went to Sunset Bay Research and Marketing Group, he said.

Pineda was neither listed as owner nor stockholder of those companies, he said.

As of Thursday, Quiones said no applications had been approved in Bulacan, Tarlac, Nueva Ecija, Zambales and Aurora.

Senior Supt. Hernando Zafrá, Bataan police chief, said while Presidential Chief of Staff Michael Defensor and Interior Secretary Ronaldo Puno had approved the one-year trial run of the game, police officials in Central Luzon opted to delay its start.

"It's held in abeyance until we get clear implementing rules from the national headquarters," Chief Supt. Alejandro Lapinud, Central Luzon police director, told the Inquirer. **Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk**

ROUNDUP

Murder suspect killed

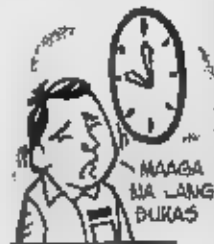
ZAMBOANGA CITY—A notorious hired gun, who allegedly killed several government officials in Zamboanga del Sur, was killed in a shootout with soldiers on Monday, the military reported. Southern Command chief Maj. Gen. Gabriel Habacon said Bandino Albios had been hunted down by authorities for a string of murder charges filed against him. "He had standing warrants of arrest for the murder of some local officials in Dinags (town)," Habacon said. He said soldiers were trying to arrest Albios, but the suspect fired at them. **Julia Alpaga, PDI Mindanao Bureau**

Quake hits Leyte, Cebu

CEBU CITY—A slight tremor struck Leyte and Cebu early yesterday. The magnitude 3.3 quake was felt at intensity 3 in Palompon, Leyte and intensity 2 here, according to the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology-Cebu. It was recorded at 12:59 p.m. and its epicenter was 33 km northwest of Ormoc City. It was tectonic in origin emanating from the Leyte segment of the Philippine Fault Zone, said Phivolcs science research specialist Rolando Montañez. **Jhunrex Napallacan, PDI Visayas Bureau**

Curfew for minors

LEGAZPI CITY—In a move to prevent juvenile delinquency and protect the young, the city council passed Tuesday an ordinance adopting curfew hours for minors (below 18 years old). The ordinance prohibits minors in the streets and public places from 10 p.m. until 4 a.m. the next day, Councilor Jim Andes said. He said the law would protect rather than suppress the rights of minors. Andes hoped that it would also address the city's problem on crimes involving children. **Edgar Alejo, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau**



Support for NSO-ARMM

COTABATO CITY—The head of the National Statistics Office (NSO) in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao is drumming up foreign and local support to upgrade and make civil registration in the region more efficient. In an assessment report submitted to the national government, NSO-ARMM Director Commander Piliplinas cited the need "to integrate" the Muslim Civil Registration System into the Civil Registry Law (RA 3753) in order to strengthen the "weak organizational structure, poor performance of some NSO personnel, lack of resources, inherent defects of the system and public apathy." Piliplinas said the NSO would need financial assistance "because of the present limited resources." Zaldy Ampatuan said his administration could support some of the needs of the agency. **Charles Sefasa, PDI Mindanao Bureau**

Amnesty for 4 ex-rebels

DAVAO CITY—Four New People's Army (NPA) rebels, who recently yielded to authorities, were given amnesty and cash incentives for returning their firearms. Maj. Jose Cuervo II, chief of the Army's 5th Civil Relations Group based in Camp Panacan here, said the former cadres received P18,000 cash each under the government's "Balk-Barli" program. They were identified as Rodolfo Betel, alias Bodol; Edgar Enoch, alias Takoy; Gerardo Embac, alias Ramos; and Jun-jun Labawan, alias Jerry. They belonged to the NPA's Milita ng Bayan District Command. **Dennis Jay Santos, PDI Mindanao Bureau**

70 policemen for GenSan

GENERAL SANTOS CITY—At least 70 new policemen are expected to be deployed in the city to augment its police force. Councilor Eduardo Leyson III, chair of the city council's committee on police matters and peace and order, said the new policemen had graduated from the Central Mindanao regional training center in Barangay Lanton here. "I'm quite certain that 70 new policemen would be assigned here. We've been asking for this and we're glad it was finally approved," he said. The city has a population of 600,000. **Aquiles Zorio, PDI Mindanao Bureau**



3 more vigilante killings

DAVAO CITY—Suspected members of the so-called Davao Death Squad (DDS) resumed their activities here after several weeks, executing three people. Their latest victim was identified as Serano Jimenez, a laborer from Agdao District. On Tuesday, two persons were also gunned down by motorcycle-riding suspects. The latest deaths brought to 46 the total number of murder cases involving vigilantes in the city, according to Chief Insp. Deciderio Clonibel, chief of the city police's investigation section. **Dennis Jay Santos, PDI Mindanao Bureau**



Para sa natatanging Pilipina



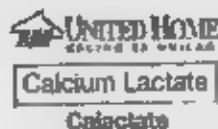
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PQA on the University of Santo Tomas: Enriching A Heritage In Total Quality Education



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"The University of Santo Tomas... where greatness is a legacy and excellence is a reality... this may sound like an advertising by-word, but the truth is, this is a realistic description of the quality of education that one gets from this 396 year-old Dominican institution. The University of Santo Tomas is a story of an academic institution that has been serving the educational needs of the Philippines for almost four centuries now, and continues to be recognized by the government and other accrediting agencies for the high quality education that it offers. As a matter of fact, UST has been granted full autonomy by the CHED due to the excellence of its flagship programs.

Today, five years short of celebrating its fourth centennial, the Pontifical and Royal University of the Philippines once again proves that quality education is its trademark, with the bestowal of the Philippine Quality Award for Proficiency in Quality Management upon her being one of the first academic institutions in the Philippines to be awarded such recognition.



Fr. Lana (third from left) receives PQA trophy from Raul Hernandez, Chair of PQA Board of Judges while UST Officials look on.

TRACING THE ORIGINS OF A QUALITY UNIVERSITY

The University of Santo Tomas is the oldest existing university in Asia and in terms of student population, the largest Catholic university in the world located in one campus. In 1805, Mgr. Miguel de Benavides O.P., the third Archbishop of Manila, donated the amount of one thousand and five hundred pesos and his personal library collection which laid the foundation of the "seminary-college" in 1811 that was to become the University of Santo Tomas. This was the beginning of tertiary education in the Philippines.

The school was first called Colegio de Nuestra Señora del Santísimo Rosario and later renamed Colegio de Santo Tomas in memory of one of the foremost Dominican Theologians, St. Thomas Aquinas. In 1824, the Colegio was authorized to confer academic degrees in Theology, Philosophy and the Arts. On November 20, 1845, Pope Innocent X elevated the Colegio to the rank of a university. In 1880, it was subsequently placed under the royal patronage. In 1788, University administration and students volunteered to defend Manila against the British invasion. In recognition of this act of exceptional loyalty, Spain's King Charles III granted it the title "Royal University". The title "Pontifical University" however, was given by Pope Leo XII. In September 17, 1902 in 1947, Pope Pius XII bestowed upon it the title "The Catholic University of the Philippines".

In 1927, with the continuing increase in enrollment, the University moved from Intramuros to its present site in Sampaloc, Manila which occupies an area of 21.5 hectares. Since its foundation, academic life in UST has been interrupted twice only: from 1898 to 1899, during the Philippine revolution against Spain; and from 1942 to 1945, during the Japanese occupation of Manila. UST was transformed into a concentration camp by the Japanese forces.

UST THROUGH THE YEARS

Recognition of the achievements of the University has come from the different parts of the world. News on these achievements brings respect and interest, and in a sense, some degree of importance on the University. That is why, world renowned personalities have always included the University as part of their itinerary among them, during the last three decades were: His Holiness Pope Paul VI and Pope John Paul II, His Royal Highness, King Juan Carlos I of Spain, Mother Theresa of Calcutta, and Pres. Jose Maria Aznar of Spain.

Owing to the assiduous pursuit of its mission to form young men and women, UST has produced distinguished alumni of national prominence and has played a pivotal role in the amelioration of the socio-political, religious, and economic condition of the country. Foremost of these alumni are heroes like Jose Rizal, Fr. Jose Burgos Marcelo H. del Pilar, Emilio Jacinto, Antonio Luna, Apolinario Mabini, and Rafael Palma. Four Philippine presidents also passed through the portals of this institution - Manuel A. Quezon, Sergio Osmeña, Jose P. Laurel and Diosdado Macapagal. Three vice presidents, three speakers of the house of representatives, senators, congressmen, numerous mayors and governors, and secretaries of the cabinet are Thomasians. UST has also contributed to the roster of Chief Justices of the Supreme Court.

A great number of bishops of the Philippine Catholic Church were nourished with the University's Thomistic philosophy. Up to this point, UST might be able to claim that its purest glory are the eight canonized saints namely: Guillermo Courat, Domingo Ibañez de Erquiza, Lucas del Espíritu Santo, Hijo de San Jacinto, Antonio Gonzales, who were all canonized on October 18, 1987; Pedro Almato, Vicente Llan de la Paz, Domingo Henares, all canonized on June 19, 1988.

Many Thomasians have become leaders and recognized men and women in the field of education, visual and performing arts, medicine, science and technology, sports, journalism, architects and scientists, not only well-known in the country but recognized abroad as well.

In a few more years, Thomasian presence will be felt in Sta. Rosa, Laguna and in General Santos City in the south. Its satellite campuses will soon emerge to further the cause of providing quality catholic education.

ORGANIZATIONAL ENVIRONMENT

UST's pursuit of excellence is evident in the way it performs its three main functions of teaching/instruction, research and community/extension services. The University sees to it that these are delivered to its stakeholders in a manner that truly speaks of the Thomasian character of competence, commitment and compassion.

UST Identity, Mission, and Vision

Identity. Competence, Compassion and Commitment are the hallmarks that make the Thomasians stand out as they take the challenge to live up to the legacy bequeathed on them by the University of Santo Tomas, under the inspiration of St. Dominic, who preached the Word with compassion, and St. Thomas, who devoted his life in seeking the "truth in love" or "veritas in caritate".

Mission. The University of Santo Tomas, the Pontifical and Catholic University of the Philippines, a Dominican institution of learning, under the inspiration and patronage of St. Thomas Aquinas, commits itself to the pursuit of truth and to the preservation, advancement and transmission of knowledge in the arts and sciences, both sacred and civil, through the use of reason illumined by faith. The University affirms its role in the formation of men and women to become competent and compassionate professionals committed to the service of the Church, the nation and the global community.

Vision. By the year 2011 UST envisions itself as a center of excellence in various programs of teaching, an acknowledged expert in key areas of research in the pure and applied sciences, a leader in community/extension services, and the Center of Contextualized Theology in Asia. It also envisions for itself an extended physical presence beyond Manila and a more functional networking mechanism with other universities/institutions.

Top: Very Rev. Fr. Tamerlane Lana, O.P. (Rector), Rev. Fr. Melchor Saria, O.P. (Vice Rector for Finance), Dr. Armando de Jesus (Vice Rector for Academic Affairs), Rev. Fr. Rodel Allgan, O.P. (Vice Rector for Religious Affairs), Rev. Fr. Isidro Abaño, O.P. (Secretary General).
Second row from left: Dr. Gloria D.C. Barnes (Asst. to the Rector for Research & Development), Engr. Alberto Laurito (Asst. to the Rector for Planning & Development), Dr. Evelyn Sougeo (Asst. to the Rector for Student Affairs), Dr. Ramon Sin (Asst. to the Rector for External Affairs).

The functions of teaching, research and community/extension services

Teaching - UST endeavors to engender graduates with a consuming passion for truth, prepared to be receivers as well as users of modern technology, and useful contributors to the community. UST offers a distinctive array of undergraduate and graduate programs and basic education in elementary and high school. UST's faculties, colleges, and institutes are -

1. College of Architecture; 2. Faculty of Arts and Letters; 3. College of Commerce; 4. College of Accountancy; 5. College of Education; 6. Faculty of Engineering; 7. College of Fine Arts and Design; 8. Conservatory of Music; 9. College of Nursing; 10. Faculty of Pharmacy; 11. College of Rehabilitation Sciences; 12. College of Science; 13. Faculties of Ecclesiastical Studies; 14. Faculty of Civil Law; 15. Faculty of Medicine and Surgery; 16. Graduate School; 17. Institute of Physical Education & Athletics; 18. Institute of Religion.

Research - UST aspires to contribute substantially to advancing the frontiers of knowledge. The various research fields of the University are grouped into five flagships namely, Arts and Humanities, Education and Social Sciences, Science and Technology, Health Sciences, and Sacred Sciences. The Thomas Aquinas Research Center has been built solely for the research function of the University.

Community and Extension Services - UST lends itself to community and extension services that are truly Christian and educative in character, and contributing to the development of an updated and empowered community. UST has its Community Development Program under the Office for Community Development. It is institutionalized in the TOMAS Program Pillars - 1. Training and Education for Capacity Development; 2. Organizing for Empowerment; 3. Management for Program Development; 4. Advocacy, Research and Documentation; 5. Spirituality of Transformation.

THE QUEST FOR THE PHILIPPINE QUALITY AWARD

With the leadership of the Father Rector through the Office of Planning and Development (OP&D), anticipating the need for performance metrics to support continuous improvement systems in AY 2002-2003 facilitated the creation of Key Result Areas (KRAs) and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) in the implementation and monitoring of the Ten Directional Areas of the Strategic Plan of UST for 2011 which were reported in the Rector's Report of AYs 2002 to 2005. These reports share with the public the efforts and improvements made by the university in the areas of: Identity, Teaching, Research, Community and Extension Services, Human Resources, Physical Resources, Growth and Expansion, Financial Resources, Public Presence, and Information Technology.

AY 2002-2003 also saw the phenomenal growth in the IT infrastructure of the University through the creation of a new Computer Center, the Santo Tomas e-Service Providers (StePS).

In order to serve the learning needs of UST students, and to bring web-based learning to the Thomasian Community, the Educational Technology Center initiated an innovative e-Learning Access



UST administrators and PQA Team members during the PQA Award ceremonies on March 15, Dusit Hotel.

From left: Engr. Deffin Jacob, Engr. Alberto Laurito, Vice Rector Fr. Juan Ponce, O.P., Rector Fr. Tamerlane Lana, O.P. (with trophy), Vice Rector for Finance Fr. Melchor Saria, O.P., Vice Rector for Academic Affairs Dr. Armando de Jesus, Mr. Rodelito Clavio. Standing from left: Dr. Cristina Castro-Cabral, Ms. Giovanna Fontanilla, Ms. Monalisa Perez, Asst. Dean Alicia Aguinaldo, Dr. Helena Cabrera, Ms. Jocelyn Agcaoili, Ms. Virginia Sambrano, Engr. Jose Carlos Luyag.

Program (e-LEAP) for institutional implementation beginning with the second semester of AY 2002-2003. Using the powerful IT infrastructure of StePS, UST's e-LEAP now delivers Web-Enhanced Courses and Fully Online Courses to students, as well as online communities for e-Guidance, University Planning and Events Management, and Student and Alumni Organizations through the use of the Blackboard Learning System and Community Portal, the most widely used Learning System and Community Portal, the most widely used Learning Management System in the United States. UST is the only user of the Blackboard Enterprise version in the Philippines. The facility enables faculty members to interact with students after classroom meetings through online announcements, discussion boards and chat sessions, virtual classrooms, online assignments and exams, and automated grade book.

The movement for Total Quality Management (TQM) started through the Office of the Vice Rector Rev. Fr. Juan V. Ponce, O.P. The program aims to instill productivity and quality consciousness among UST's academic and non-academic employees, create awareness on how TQM could be linked and applied in the various activities of the University in order to attain customer-focused services, assess areas where the University should focus on improvement activities, and implement quality and productivity programs and activities that will strengthen and complement TQM applications in the academe.

The Rector is the TQM Champion who provides the overall program thrust and directions while the Vice-Rector is the TQM Operations Chair who oversees the implementation of the program. A Technical & Support Group and a Core Group assist the Rector and the Vice Rector. An executive orientation was conducted and an extensive training was given to provide the members with knowledge and skills on the basic Quality and Productivity tools and techniques, TQM and PQA.

UST recognizes its employees as its most valuable assets - providers of excellent service to its customers. Hence UST saw the need for employees' total participation in the improvement process through continuous education, training and development. To be able to do this, UST introduced the Quality Team (QT) program. To sustain the program, TQM Quality Workplace Audits are being conducted every semester to check on the implementation of TQM principles and Good Housekeeping or 5S guidelines in all departments and colleges for which faculty, staff, and students are continuously being trained to conduct.

PQA IN VIEW OF 2011

Having been granted the Philippine Quality Award, the University of Santo Tomas brings into its fourth hundred year of establishment in 2011 the seal of approval of its proficiency in quality management. From 2008 onwards, UST will have to maintain this quality to be able to continue with its mission in providing Filipinos with quality catholic education.



Recognition for Proficiency in Quality Management

“Sa ating mga ina ng tahanan, napakahalaga ang kalusugan ng ating pamilya.

Pagdating sa gamot, buo ang aking tiwala sa Ritemed.
De-kalidad na, magaan pa sa balsa.
Napagkakatiwalaan dahil gawa ng Unilab.”

Ma. Consuelo Z. Garcia
MA. CONSUELO Z. GARCIA, M.D.
President,
Private School Health Officers' Association



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CSI Malls • Melstar • Maya Bookstore • MS Maswerte Supermarket • Vetsafe Store • New Santiago Liberty Store
Lucky Educational Supply • Robertson Department Store • Master Square Department Store • Bookshop Center
Cagayan Educational Supply • Valuepoint Superstores

Impartiality sought in mine spill probe

LEGAZPI CITY—A RANKING OFFICIAL OF the Albay provincial government appealed to an investigating body to be impartial in its work in determining the cause of two mine spills from the operations of the Lafayette Philippines Inc. (LPI) in Rapu-Rapu town.

Vice Gov. James Calisín, in a testimony made before the Rapu-Rapu Fact Finding Commission (RFC), said he was for responsible mining.

He presented a copy of the Environment Code of Albay that he authored in 2003.

He earlier questioned the independence of the RFC after President Macapagal-Arroyo appointed Bishop Arturo Bastes as its chair. Bastes is campaigning for a stop to mining in Rapu-Rapu.

Bastes, in response to Calisín, invited the governor to attend the hearings of the RFC to find out how independent the commission is.

A class suit filed by lawyer Gil Gojol against LPI has been raffled to judges of the Regional Trial Court in Sorsogon City.

Gojol said he filed the case representing some 3,000 fishermen who claimed they were deprived of livelihood following a fish scare that was blamed on the Rapu-Rapu mine spills.

The case went to the sala of RTC Branch 52 Judge Honesto Villamor, he said.

Albay Gov. Fernando Gonzalez denied reports that there were skin diseases attributed to the LPI mining operations.

He said the milling process, which was temporarily stopped, was resumed only after defects in its facilities had been corrected by LPI.

Witnesses earlier testified that sacks of dead fish were recovered near the LPI's mine tailings discharge areas after the Oct. 31 spill.

But Legazpi City Mayor Noel Rosal said the demand and supply of fish and marine products coming from Rapu-Rapu Island did not change even with the reported fish kill.

Urban poor leader Jun de la Torre told the RFC that there was no need for an independent body to investigate the effects of LPI's mining operations, saying "the fish kills speak for itself."

Charles Avila, RFC vice chair, said they would not pay attention to the rallies and lobbies.

"We will only pay attention to the public in a proper forum to accomplish our job," he said.

The RFC was created by Ms Arroyo through Administrative Order No. 145. Edgar Alejo, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

General sees more clashes with NPA

GENERAL SANTOS City—A ranking military officer yesterday said he was expecting more clashes to occur between his troops and New People's Army (NPA) rebels in Sarangani.

Brig. Gen. Alfredo Cayton, commander of the Army's 601st Infantry Brigade, told the INQUIRER that an intensified operation was launched in Makunog, Sarangani after Tuesday's clash in Tamban Village where two rebels were killed.

Cayton said the NPA rebels, under the Front Committee 71 operating in Sarangani province and General Santos, were caught unaware when soldiers attacked their camp in Sino Kamugna.

He said the heavy exchange of gunfire lasted for about 15

minutes. After the gunfight, Cayton said the soldiers recovered the bodies of the slain bandits and two rifles.

He said the encounter in Tamban was the offshoot of an operation launched by his unit after intelligence reports about communist guerrillas massing up had been confirmed.

He said the assembly could be part of a major tactical offensive the NPA has planned in time for its founding anniversary on March 29.

In Davao City, a councilor asked the military to stop using civilians as "bait" in the government's anti-insurgency campaign in Paquibato District.

Paquibato is a known lair of communist rebels in Southern Mindanao.

Councilor Nenita Orcullo also urged the disarming of members of indigenous communities, who had allegedly been provided firearms by the military.

"(The military) cannot deny this. This is a fact. The arming of the *lumad* is the primary reason why the situation of Paquibato is volatile now. For this I am urging the military to immediately pull out their forces and disarm the *lumad*," Orcullo said.

Aquiles Zonia and Jeffrey Tupas, PDI Mindanao Bureau



PETS

Ducklings are sold for P5 each on a street in Davao City. The birds are being sold as pets by this street vendor.

DENNIS JAY SANTOS/PDI MINDANAO BUREAU

Media group assails Army order of battle

By Carla P Gomez
PDI Visayas Bureau

BACOLOD CITY—NEGROS JOURNALISTS yesterday protested the inclusion of a radio news director here in the Armed Forces' order of battle and called on AFP Chief of Staff Gen. Generoso Senga to remove his name from the list and ensure his safety and unhampered practice of his profession.

Article 3, the alliance of Negros journalists, was reacting to the inclusion of the name of Julius Mariveles in a list of "top leaders" of the Communist Party of the Philippines-New People's Army drawn up by the AFP Central Command (Centcom).

Article 3 is an alliance of the Negros Press Club, Congress of Active Media Practitioners (Camp), Correspondents, Broadcasters and Reporters Association-Active News Service (Cobra-Ans) and the National Union of Journalists in the Philippines (NUJP)-Negros.

Mariveles, an Article 3 convenor, is the news director of dyEZ Aksyon Radyo-Bacolod of the Manila Broadcasting Co. He is also secretary general of the Cobra-Ans and an officer of the Negros Media Council for Press Freedom.

Mariveles yesterday also called on the AFP to strike his name off its Central Command Order of Battle for the first semester of 2005 because he was never secretary general of the party-list Bayan Muna as it claimed.

Mariveles said he was a secretary general of the Bagong Alyansang Makabayan or Bayan-Negros but he has been a full-time working journalist since 2003, when he was employed by MBC's

Aksyon Radyo-Bacolod news director.

"It is queer that despite the numerous interviews I have conducted with Army officials themselves, their intelligence report last year has never been updated. I could only hope that this is a case of oversight or failure to update," he said.

He said it was impossible for him to be with Bayan and working for Aksyon Radyo at the same time. "I am aware that it is unethical to be a working journalist and an official at the same time of a political party," he said.

Article 3 in its statement demanded that the intelligence services of both the military and police rigorously review their order of battle.

The list, a copy of which was obtained by Article 3, was prepared early this year and identified Mariveles as secretary general of the party-list group Bayan Muna in Negros and among the leaders of the revolutionary movement.

Article 3 said it has reasons to believe the continued inclusion of Mariveles' name on the list is more than a case of mere oversight.

"Given the continued threats against press freedom from this administration since even before President Macapagal-Arroyo declared her short-lived state of national emergency and the growing list of activists murdered in the country, we worry that, unless rectified immediately, the inclusion of Mr. Mariveles in the list constitutes a continuing clear and present danger to his life and to his unhampered practice of our profession," Article 3 said.



HARVEST TIME

A group of farmers in Asingan, Pangasinan harvest rice plants to prepare for a second cropping. Water irrigation levels are low due to onset of the dry season.

TOOTS SOBERANO/OPINION NORTHERN LUZON BUREAU

Backpackers suffer culture shock in jail

LA TRINIDAD, BENGUET—ELEVEN BACKPACKERS, who have been accused of raiding a military armory in Mankayan town on Feb. 10 with suspected communist rebels, have been giving the Benguet provincial jail and its inmates their own version of culture shock.

Jail officials told the INQUIRER that two of the backpackers had complained about being punched by some inmates because their "punk" hairstyle and music did not sit well with the inmates' lifestyle.

The backpackers have drawn public attention because the Benguet provincial police identified them as New People's Army members, despite the fact that they wear nose rings and style their hair in dreadlocks and Mohawks.

"We are treated well here. But two of [our crew] showed up with black eyes because they were beaten up in their cell by the detainees. I don't know what happened. They have been transferred to a new cell," said Rundren Berloize Lao, 24, of Davao City.

'Invasion'

On Thursday, both the jailhouse and the Benguet Justice Hall were disturbed by the "invasion" of 30 teenagers wearing "punk-styled" black shirts and graffiti-laden pants, to show their support at their arraignment.

The arraignment did not proceed. Lawyer Pabito Sanidad, national chair of the Free Legal Assistance Group (Flag), and officials of the Cordillera Human Rights Alliance, asked Judge Benigno Galacgac of the regional trial court here to quash the charges.

The lawyers said the prejudice inside and outside the Benguet jailhouse was ironic because it was also prejudice against the backpackers' appearance, which caused authorities to charge them with participating in the armory raid.

The February attack killed one soldier and two members of the Civilian Armed Forces Geographical Unit.

"How can you believe the NPA would recruit these fellows? They'd become a headache for the rebels," said human rights lawyer Noe Villanueva.

Eyewitnesses' accounts

Senior Supt. Villamor Bumanglag, Benguet provincial police director, said their case would depend on eyewitnesses' accounts that placed the backpackers at the raid.

The youths, including a 15-year-old girl from Marikina City and a 15-year-old boy from Pasig City, were arrested in Buguias town. They had hitched a ride to Sagada town in Mt. Province.

They have since become popular online. Supporters organized an online petition to "free the Sagada 11," which already solicited 1,354 signatures from sympathizers in the country, Japan and the United States.

A self-proclaimed group of hackers, who call themselves Justice League of the Internet, threatened to hack the websites of the Philippine National Police in retaliation for the backpackers' arrest.

CHRA officials said it is the outpouring of support from youths all over the country, which has kept the detainees hopeful about their release. Vincent Cabrera and Desiree Caluza, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

Church leaders back Pangasinan cop chief

LINGAYEN, PANGASINAN—CHURCH LEADERS, government officials and businessmen have called for the reinstatement of the province's police director, describing his relief as "unfair."

Senior Supt. Alan Purisima was relieved as Pangasinan police director following the Philippine National Police's three-strike policy on illegal gambling.

The policy means that if three towns are found to have illegal gambling operations, the provincial director will be removed from his post.

Archbishop Oscar Cruz, anti-illegal gambling crusader, said Pangasinan had been jueteng-free because of Purisima and "therefore I find it quite unfair that the mere presence of certain videos will mean his relief."

He said it was "pity that a provincial director should be relieved because of a few video machines."

"There had been a good number of machines confiscated and destroyed by the provincial and town police in the past months and the work must be on-going," he said.

Cruz asked Camp Crame officials "on behalf of the good people of Pangasinan, to reevaluate their decision."

Seven video machines were found in Urdaneta City and the towns of Bantusa and Alcala by the PNP's anti-illegal gambling task force last February.

Gov. Victor Agbayani also questioned Purisima's relief and asked Interior Secretary Ronaldo Puno to have him reinstated.

He asked why Purisima's relief should be based on the report of the task force whose four members were arrested earlier on charges of involvement in extortion in San Manuel town. Yolanda Sotelo-Fuertes, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

Sigaw Ng Bayan!

1. Yes to amending the 1987 Constitution!

We are tired of being told to defer amending the Charter to an undetermined future. The time to do it is *now*—and to postpone the effort would be fatal to our democracy. We need to achieve greater political stability—to eliminate the extremists' threat to grab power and rule by decree through a junta; we need to improve government by making it efficient and less costly to operate. And we must propel the economy to a sustainable and competitive level of growth—so that we can lift our people from poverty and build a modern middle class.

2. Yes to a shift to the parliamentary system!

The presidential system with a bicameral legislature has failed the Filipino people. The record of the past 60 years of presidential government does not lie: the growing rural and urban slums, the widening economic gap between rich and poor, the falling quality of health care and other basic services, the deteriorating quality of education. The biggest proof of all is this: Eight million Filipinos have left to seek opportunities abroad. Now is the time to discard what has not worked for us, and to adopt what will work, as the experience of successful nations prove. A comparison with our neighbors in Southeast Asia shows that the Philippines has lagged behind in development. Singapore, Malaysia and Thailand—all with parliamentary governments—are all wondrously prosperous. Of the top 20 rich nations in the world—including those of Europe, North America and Asia—all except the United States are under parliamentary governments.

3. Yes to the abolition of the Senate and the House of Representatives!

The two houses of Congress are the symbols of the failings of the bicameral presidential system. An investigative report in the *Manila Standard Today's* March 21, 2006 issue estimates that the Senate spends an *incredible* P668.4 million in taxpayers' money to approve just one bill! This amount could instead go into the building of badly-needed classrooms and health-care centers in rural Philippines. The same report said the House of Representatives approved more than 400 bills—20 of them of national application—in the past year, but all for nothing without Senate action on these bills. In our country, the two-chamber legislature produces only monumental paralysis in law-making and a waste of people's money that we can no longer afford.

4. Yes to creating a unicameral parliament!

The experience of successful parliamentary governments in Europe and Asia proves that a unicameral parliament is the most efficient way to craft laws and policies to drive growth. The party in power runs the programs of government; the opposition party provides the checks and balances essential for the survival of representative democracy. This is the type of government we want—one based on platform and programs and *not* on celebrity or popularity. A one-house parliament in a parliamentary system requires party discipline and adherence to party ideals. It will eliminate opportunistic party-switching and make political parties responsible and transparent in their actions.

5. Yes to a people's initiative to amend the Constitution!

After two months of intensive consultations with our people, we have become absolutely certain that Filipinos want a shift to the parliamentary system of government. This is the cry everywhere—both in our big cities and in our small-town barangays. The Senate and the House of Representatives still cannot agree on how to amend the Charter. They cannot continue to disagree on this issue until kingdom come.

When leaders refuse to lead, we have one last resort in seeking Charter amendments: our people must take the lead!

When politicians refuse to act out of blind ambition, the Filipino people are ready to take action!

We are for people's initiative to amend our constitution directly. We call on our people in every barangay to support this.

Bangon tayo! Amindahan ang Constitution. Ito ang sigaw ng bayan!

Sigaw ng Bayan Movement!

Alberto Ong Jr., Alliance for Peace and Improvement (API) • John Carlo Masapo, Youth for Peace and Development • Sheik Sirad Manggas, Filipino Muslim Democratic Alliance • Rey Campanera, Alyansa ng mga Benepisaryo-Basero • Eiren de Luna, ACTO Transport Groups • Foring Yabut, Masa Bangsa • Ruth Vasquez, Babae Para sa Kaunlaran • Adel Lazaro, Akbay Pinoy (OPW) Inc. • Benny Cesaria, United Filipino Seafarers • Leticia Granilo, Katsambayan • Jose Moreno Jr., Kilos Masa • Miguel Manota, Kamanggagawa • Dr. Danilo P. Quines, Monitoring Group of the Philippines • Rolando Montiel, Kilusan ng Mamamayan Para Sa Matatag ng Republika • Dela Amerol Ambing, National Muslim for Peace and Order Council • Basis S. Dalu-Linem, Muhader Action for Progress and Peace • Danilo Teope, Lakes Pinoy-NCR • Orian Ravelas, Southern Tagalog Alliance for Genuine Empowerment and Services-Calabzon • Edmundo Mission, Alyansa ng Mamamayan ng Rizal • Joven Pajon, PAROLA • Sergio Tolentino Jr., World War II Legionaries of the Philippines • Gerald Dequina, Mikebagong Peace for Progress Movement • Danny Mengaltes, Tau Gamma Phi-Quezon City Council • Peter Esrael, Tagumpay ng Mamamayan ng Navotas, Inc. • Tessie Lagma-Balboa, Mga Bituin ng Kahapon, Ngayon at Kailanman • Elias Beltran, Angat Antas Kabuhayan Filipino Movement • Ace Batahalay, Kongreso ng Maralitang Pilipino • Romie Reomalis, Samahang Nagkakaisa sa Pampanga • Cns Lacamana, People's Active Determination for Equality Rights • Amy Azarcon, Samahan ng Mga Ina sa Cavite • Zory Tobias, Southern Tagalog Council of Women Cooperatives

LOTTO RESULT

EZ2 SUERTRES

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SIX DIGIT

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(Results above in exact order)

SUPERLOTTO 6/49

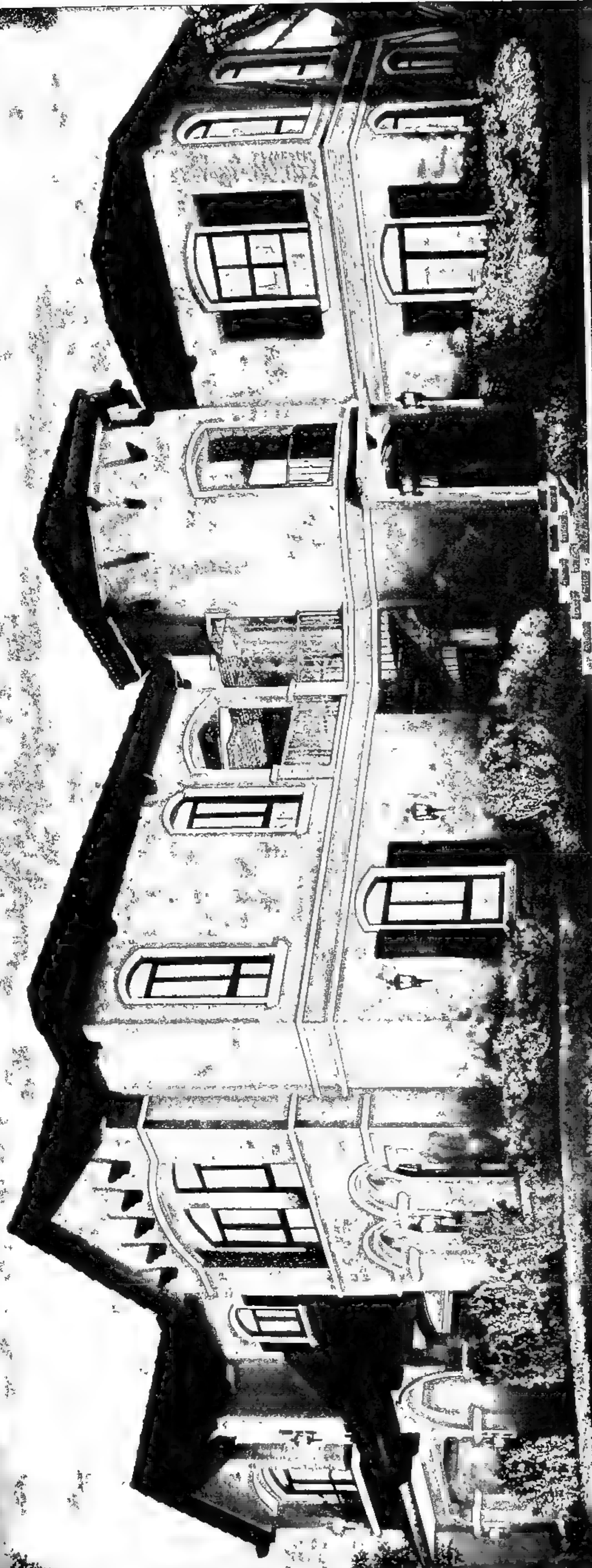
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OPERATIONS BACK TO NORMAL

Oil overflow alarms Pandacan residents

By Tina G. Santos and Margaux C. Ortiz

GASOLINE OVERFLOWED FROM A STORAGE tank of Caltex Philippines Thursday morning, alarming residents living near the Pandacan oil depot.

A source from the Pandacan Depot Services Inc., who requested anonymity saying he was not authorized to discuss the incident, said the gasoline came from a pipeline in a storage farm inside the depot. Caltex officials were not immediately available for comment.

But he added the problem was immediately contained, and there was no oil spill outside the depot or the Pasig River. He said oil companies used highly sophisticated equipment and implemented safety measures to avoid accidents.

The depot on the southern bank of the Pasig River near the Nagtahan Bridge is maintained by the country's three big oil companies. It consists of large manufacturing and storage facilities for petrochemicals that are connected by pipelines all the way to refineries in Batangas province.

Manila Fire Marshal Pablito Cordeta, who checked the situation, said it was not an oil spill. "One of the tanks of Caltex overflowed but only into the band wall, which is like a basin at the base of the tank. This is where excess gasoline goes," Cordeta said. The tank contained some 24,000 barrels of ordinary gasoline, he added.

Manila Mayor Lito Atienza said the Caltex management denied there was an oil spill. "There was just a slight overflow of gasoline. According to them depot operations were normalized afterwards," Atienza said.

Domingo Seposo, chair of Barangay 836 Zone 91, said the incident might have been caused by negligence of personnel in charge of the operations.

Suspended

Authorities said depot operations were suspended temporarily and trucks of fillings stations were not allowed to enter. Electrical devices were shut down. Despite the authorities' assurance that there was no cause for alarm, many residents nearly panicked when the news spread around the community around 7 a.m.

"We have been urging the government to do something about the oil depot. We are always afraid it would blow up," said Nenita Salve, 56.

Firefighters said a carelessly thrown lighted cigarette could trigger an explosion and start a fire in the densely populated Pandacan area. They said liquid fuel could also spill to the Pasig. The firefighters added that Metro Manila did not have the equipment to put out fires triggered by accidents at the depot.

"Accidents will happen no matter how careful we are. The Pandacan depot is an accident waiting to happen. The repercussions are beyond imagination," they said.

The city government, particularly the City Council, is drafting on an ordinance changing the area's classification from industrial.

Under the Manila Comprehensive Land Use Plan and Zoning Ordinance of 2005, the Pandacan area may be reclassified into commercial/residential, making it unsuitable for the depot's operations.

"The health, safety and welfare of the public, particularly of residents in the area, is our utmost concern," Councilor Lourdes Isip-Garcia said in an earlier interview. She said they are also concerned about the depot's proximity to Malacañang Palace. The Pandacan oil depot supplies around 50 percent of Luzon's fuel needs and around 82 percent of Metro Manila's gasoline and diesel requirements. It is considered vital to national security and is heavily guarded.

Precaution

Supt. Rogelio Rosales, Manila Police District (MPD) Station 10 chief, said the Pandacan incident "was just part of the depot's regular operations." He told the INQUIRER residents complained of nausea caused by an overpowering smell of oil.

Rosales said security officer Oscar dela Cruz told police the container that was being refilled probably still had some oil left, causing it to overflow. "But there was a catch basin at the bottom of the container that ensured there was no spill," Rosales said.

"Depot officials said overflowing was a normal occurrence, and they had safety precautions to prevent any untoward scenarios," Rosales said, adding the incident lasted only 10 minutes.

The police official said the MPD's Task Force Pandacan was ensuring the safety of the area and surrounding barangay. Three round-the-clock checkpoints were maintained near the depot and the inner and outer perimeters were patrolled regularly.

WHAT'S INSIDE

■ Half of MMDA's 2006 budget goes to waste /A21

■ Tug-of-war over recovered cash in Ultra stampede moves to court /A21

■ Don't drag family in case, Umale's wife tells Chavit /A21

■ Man dies after setting bed on fire /A21



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Spare family, Umale's wife tells Chavit

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr. and Norman Bordadora

SPARE THE FAMILY

Clarissa Umale, wife of slain businessman Leonardo Umale, asked yesterday Locos Sur Gov. Luis "Chavit" Singson not to drag their family into the case.

"I won't give Chavit the opportunity to malign my husband and my family," she told reporters. She was reacting to Singson's statement that she should also be investigated in connection with her husband's murder because Umale had a first wife, with whom he had two sons and two daughters. Clarissa admitted her husband and his first wife were together for 15 years. She married Umale after he and his first wife separated.

"For the record I have not met her (first wife) and I have no intention of meeting her," Clarissa said, wondering why Singson dragged the family into the case. Umale's first wife Magdalena Santos arrived from abroad on Sunday after learning about what happened. She told the INQUIRER yesterday she also wanted to monitor personally the investigation and prayed for justice for her former husband. "We just hope... they would spare our children from intrigues," Magdalena said.

She was reluctant to give interviews, fearing the family would be put at the center of the controversy. She confirmed Clarissa's statement that they had not

met. Magdalena left the country after she separated from Umale, but three of their children, including Tintin, stayed with their father.

Tintin, 30, told the INQUIRER she was just three years old when her parents separated. She said she and her siblings grew up with their stepmother, with whom Umale had two more daughters.

"We did not have any problems... Our stepmother treated us like her own children," Tintin said. She welcomed the arrival of her mother and sister Cathy, who she said had not seen her father "for a very long time." Clarissa said Magdalena had not seen her former husband and children "for about 26 years."

Umale was shot by four armed men as he was about to enter his Pearl Plaza Building in Pasig City last week with Tintin and Clarissa. Clarissa said Singson was behind the murder. Denying the allegation, Singson cited nine cases that he said might have motivated the killing. He also said one of Umale's sons was involved in the Valle Verde Gang, an alleged group of car thieves.

Clarissa defended her stepson, saying he was cleared of any involvement in the case. "Why would he do that? We have many cars. And all our cars are registered," Clarissa said.

Singson denied Clarissa's claim that he was the only one with an axe to grind against the businessman. "If I have 100 enemies, Umale has 1,000," he said.



PERFECT SPOT

Chess players find that even the sidewalk along Tejeron Street in Makati City could be an ideal spot to play the game.

EDWIN SACASMAS

Fight over recovered cash at Ultra stampede moves to court

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

THE TUG-OF-WAR FOR THE P49,000 rescuers recovered from a stampede victim in Pasig City last month is moving to a courtroom.

The family of Virginia Javierto, 81, who was killed with her daughter during

the stampede at the Philsports Arena, is preparing charges against the family of stampede victim Aurora Soriano, 56, to whom Pasig City Mayor Vicente Eusebio handed the recovered cash.

"They (Soriano family) refuse to return our mother's money. We will file estafa and perjury charges against

them," Javierto's son Rizaldy told the INQUIRER yesterday.

Eastern Police District investigation head Chief Insp. Rolly Vilar had declared the Soriano family "wrongly received" the cash. Rizaldy and three of his siblings went to the police station yesterday to reiterate their claim.

PO2 Arman Valenzuela said, when they called up Soriano's daughter Shirley yesterday, she said she would just face the Javierto family in court.

"Shirley said they already had a lawyer," Valenzuela added. Shirley told the police earlier they had already spent half of the amount.

Pasig City Rescue volunteer Candy Lacio found the money in the pocket of an elderly woman holding a sky blue bag. Lacio found Soriano's identification card inside the bag which enabled her to locate Soriano's children. The cash was later handed over to Soriano's son Lovinsky in Eusebio's presence.

Half of MMDA's 2006 budget goes to waste

By Terra V. Quismundo

ALMOST HALF OF THE TOTAL budget this year of the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) would be spent on garbage.

Congress approved Tuesday a 2006 budget of P1.095 billion for MMDA, slightly higher than last year's P1.086 billion. The biggest share, P487 million, of this year's budget will go to garbage disposal, the MMDA announced yesterday. Some P298 will be spent on flood control, and P177 million on traffic management. The remaining P133 million will be for foreign assisted projects.

MMDA Assistant General Manager for Finance Edensson Falsman said the budget was approved without cuts. "We are

happy with the outcome of the budget hearing... there was no opposition from the congressmen," he said. But MMDA General Manager Robert Nacianceno said the agency could require more than double the budget allocation, about P1 billion, to dispose of Metro Manila's garbage. Operators of facilities where the MMDA brought the garbage were asking for higher tipping fees.

The MMDA, which is tasked to dispose of the metro's garbage, currently uses the Montalban Solid Waste Disposal Facility in Rodriguez, Rizal, Clark Development Corporation in Capas, Tarlac; and controlled dumps in Navotas and Payatas, Quezon City, for roughly 4,000 tons of garbage collected daily.

METROBRIEFS

Not a bright move

A TRICYCLE driver stole the engine of his neighbor's motorcycle and tried to sell it to the same person the next day. His victim wasn't amused. Homer Bacal was arrested for allegedly stealing the engine block of his neighbor Rodolfo Aplacador's motorcycle in front of the latter's home in East Fairview, Quezon City, before dawn of March 20, police said. The next day, Bacal knocked on his neighbor's door offering to sell an engine block, according to a report by investigator PO2 Gregorio Maramag. When Aplacador inspected the motorcycle part, he was shocked to find that it looked like the one he had lost. Turning the engine around, he saw familiar scratches that he had made on the engine block. He showed the marks to Bacal and immediately called a policeman neighbor, SPO3 Rodolfo Quintano, who arrested the suspect, police said. Upon learning the news, a witness, Larry Bernaldez, told police he had seen Bacal detach the engine from Aplacador's motorcycle using a wrench.



DJ Yap

Work of amateur

THE POLICE ARRESTED yesterday a 25-year-old man linked to the abduction of his neighbor inside their posh Quezon City village the other night. A police officer familiar with the case but who declined to be identified described the alleged kidnapping as "amateurish." Police operatives arrested Sherwyn Ang, a resident of the Corinthian Gardens, early morning Thursday, confirmed Deputy Director General Oscar Calderon, chief of the Presidential Anti-Crime and Emergency Response (Pacer), the elite anti-kidnapping unit of the police. At 11 p.m. on Wednesday, Ang and his girlfriend Michelle Lu, allegedly kidnapped William How, 57, a businessman, while he was jogging inside the village, police said. They forced him into a Toyota Corolla with plate NO. URX-720 and took How later to a vacant house on Tabuena Street, where Ang also lived. The suspects had demanded a P20 million ransom and then left him. The victim able to escape yesterday, and with the assistance of Pacer and village security personnel, Ang was arrested after How identified the abductor's car. The manhunt for Lu is ongoing, police said.

Luiza A. del Puerto

Down with bill ads

TO SHOW that the Valenzuela City government was bent on putting order in all major roads and other areas, all illegal billboards and other signs would be dismantled and motorcades would no longer be allowed during weekdays. These were the orders of City Mayor Sherwin Gatchalian to members of the city's clean and green brigade. The city has an existing ordinance regulating the installation and display of streamers, billboards and advertising signs along major roads, parks and open spaces. Gatchalian added that to avoid clutter in the city's major thoroughfares, the holding of motorcades particularly during weekdays would not be encouraged.

Nancy C. Carvajal

Man dies after setting bed on fire

A MAN died after he allegedly set his bed on fire on Wednesday in Navotas. Police Supt. Genesis Tolejano identified the victim as Edmund Arellano, 30, of 29 Adelfa St., Marville Subdivision. Members of his family immediately put out the fire and rushed the victim to the Tondo Medical Center and General Hospital for treatment, but Arellano died on the way. "Although the victim had burns all over his body, the cause of his death has yet to be determined through an autopsy," Tolejano said. Initial investigation showed that the victim, who was reported to have a mental disability, was alone in his room when the incident happened. Details on what Arellano allegedly used to start the fire were not immediately available.

Nancy C. Carvajal

PNPA alumni homecoming

ALUMNI of the Philippine National Police Academy will hold its 26th annual homecoming on March 24 and 25 at the PNPA grounds in Camp Castañeda in Silang, Cavite. The thrust of the traditional homecoming shall be more on bonding and camaraderie of families of every alumnus, according to Superintendent Romulo Sapitilla, president of the PNPA Batch '86, which together with Batch '96, are hosts of this year's event. Chief Inspector Ghiesla Porteno is the president of Batch '96 alumni. This year's hosts also initiated the adopt-a-classroom program to help the academy build a state-of-the-art classroom for PNPA cadets. Distinguished alumni, as well as those who passed the Career Civil Service Executive and Bar examinations, shall be presented the "Lakan Awards" during the program.

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INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The PHILIPPINE PORTS AUTHORITY, Port District Office - Visayas, through its Bids and Awards Committee Engineering Project (BAC-EP), invites contractors registered with and classified by the Philippine Contractors Accreditation Board (PCAB) to apply for eligibility and to bid for the hereunder contract:

Name of Contract	Location	Major Items of Work	Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC)	Source of Funds	Contract Duration	PCAB Registration	Required Equipment																						
Improvement of Basilio Port	Basilio, Iloilo, Capiz	1) Reclamation (2,240.0 sq.m.) 2) Concrete Pavement (2,240.0 sq.m.) 3) Construction of Open Shed (15.0 m x 20.0 m)	P 1,491,262.45	PPA Corporate Fund	One Hundred Forty Five (145) Calendar Days	Medium A "Port & Offshore Engineering"	<table border="1"> <tr><td>1) Saw Cutter</td><td>Owned</td></tr> <tr><td>2) 2 units</td><td>Owned</td></tr> <tr><td>3) 2 units</td><td>Owned</td></tr> <tr><td>4) 2 units</td><td>Owned</td></tr> <tr><td>5) 1 unit</td><td>Owned/Leased</td></tr> <tr><td>6) 2 units</td><td>Owned/Leased</td></tr> <tr><td>7) 1 unit</td><td>Owned/Leased</td></tr> <tr><td>8) 1 unit</td><td>Owned/Leased</td></tr> <tr><td>9) 1 unit</td><td>Owned/Leased</td></tr> <tr><td>10) 1 unit</td><td>Owned/Leased</td></tr> <tr><td>11) 1 unit</td><td>Owned/Leased</td></tr> </table>	1) Saw Cutter	Owned	2) 2 units	Owned	3) 2 units	Owned	4) 2 units	Owned	5) 1 unit	Owned/Leased	6) 2 units	Owned/Leased	7) 1 unit	Owned/Leased	8) 1 unit	Owned/Leased	9) 1 unit	Owned/Leased	10) 1 unit	Owned/Leased	11) 1 unit	Owned/Leased
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Name of Contract	Location	Major Items of Work	Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC)	Source of Funds	Contract Duration	PCAB Registration	Required Equipment																															
Proposed Port Development Project	Vinzonsan, Dabup Island, Marikina Samar	1) Const. of Causeway (8.0 m x 56.0 m) 2) Const. of R.C. Pier (9.0 m x 65.0 m) P 26,012,941.67	PPA Corporate Fund	Two Hundred Sixty (260) Calendar Days	Medium A "Port & Offshore Engineering"	<table border="1"> <tr><td>1) Saw Cutter</td><td>Owned</td></tr> <tr><td>2) 2 units</td><td>Owned</td></tr> <tr><td>3) 2 units</td><td>Owned</td></tr> <tr><td>4) 2 units</td><td>Owned</td></tr> <tr><td>5) 1 unit</td><td>Owned/Leased</td></tr> <tr><td>6) 2 units</td><td>Owned/Leased</td></tr> <tr><td>7) 1 unit</td><td>Owned/Leased</td></tr> <tr><td>8) 1 unit</td><td>Owned/Leased</td></tr> <tr><td>9) 1 unit</td><td>Owned/Leased</td></tr> <tr><td>10) 1 unit</td><td>Owned/Leased</td></tr> <tr><td>11) 1 unit</td><td>Owned/Leased</td></tr> <tr><td>12) 1 unit</td><td>Owned/Leased</td></tr> <tr><td>13) 1 unit</td><td>Owned/Leased</td></tr> <tr><td>14) 1 unit</td><td>Owned/Leased</td></tr> <tr><td>15) 1 unit</td><td>Owned/Leased</td></tr> <tr><td>16) 1 unit</td><td>Owned/Leased</td></tr> </table>	1) Saw Cutter	Owned	2) 2 units	Owned	3) 2 units	Owned	4) 2 units	Owned	5) 1 unit	Owned/Leased	6) 2 units	Owned/Leased	7) 1 unit	Owned/Leased	8) 1 unit	Owned/Leased	9) 1 unit	Owned/Leased	10) 1 unit	Owned/Leased	11) 1 unit	Owned/Leased	12) 1 unit	Owned/Leased	13) 1 unit	Owned/Leased	14) 1 unit	Owned/Leased	15) 1 unit	Owned/Leased	16) 1 unit	Owned/Leased
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Prospective bidders should possess a valid PCAB license and registration particulars applicable to the type and cost of the contract to be bid. bidders have to personnel and equipment available for the prosecution of the contract, must have completed 50% for Major Items of Work (indicated above) as contract/projects with similar in nature and complexity to this contract to be bid within the past five (5) years immediately preceding the publication of this invitation, with a value of at least 50% of the ABC, and must also have the publication of the Eligibility Statement. Applications for eligibility, as well as the preliminary examination of bids, will be evaluated on "pass/fail" criteria. The BAC will conduct post-qualification of the lowest calculated bid in accordance with the IRR-A at RA 9184. A contract will be awarded only to the lowest calculated and responsive bidder.

All particulars relative to Eligibility Statement and Screening, Bid Security, Performance Security, Pre-Bidding Conference, Evaluation of Bids, Post-qualification and Award of Contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of RA 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR).

The schedule of BAC activities is as follows:

BAC Activities	Date
1. Receipt from prospective bidders of Letters of Intent (LOI) including Application for Eligibility	April 06 - 17, 2006
2. Issuance of Eligibility Forms	April 06 - 24, 2006
3. Receipt of Eligibility Requirements	May 1, 2006

The BAC will issue to prospective bidders Eligibility Forms at Philippine Ports Authority, Port District Office - Visayas, CIP Complex, Serango Osmena Blvd., North Reclamation Area, Cebu City upon receipt of submission of a LOI, photocopy of PCAB License and upon payment of a non-refundable amount of P1,100.00 (inclusive of VAT) to the Philippine Ports Authority, Port District Office - Visayas, Cebu City. Prospective bidders must submit the Eligibility Requirements to the BAC, at the said address. They may also obtain the results of the Eligibility Check by the BAC at the same address.

The BAC will issue Bidding Documents only to bidders declared by the BAC to be eligible for the bidding upon payment of a non-refundable amount of P2,500.00 (inclusive of VAT) to the Philippine Ports Authority, Port District Office - Visayas, Cebu City.

The Philippine Ports Authority, Port District Office - Visayas reserves the right to accept or reject any bid, to award the bidding process, and to reject all bids at any time prior to the award of contract without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidder or bidders.

Approved by:
(Sgd.) JAMES J. GANTALAO

(PDI - March 24 & 31, 2006)

Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas

BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) invites registered general building contractors with current Philippine Contractors Accreditation Board (PCAB) License to apply for eligibility and to bid for the project:

Project Name: Proposed Rehabilitation of Tawara Marikina Condominiums
Location: Tawara Marikina Condominiums, Tawara Marikina, Marikina City
Scope of Work: Rehabilitation of Tawara Marikina Condominiums, Tawara Marikina, Marikina City. The project includes the rehabilitation of the existing structure, including the foundation, walls, floors, roof, and other structural elements. The project also includes the installation of new windows, doors, and other fixtures. The project is to be completed within a period of 12 months.

Project Location: Tawara Marikina Condominiums, Tawara Marikina, Marikina City
Approved Budget: P 1,500,000.00
Source of Funding: BSP Corporate Funds
Contract Duration: Sixty (60) calendar days

Minimum Requirements (Criteria):
 PCAB License: Registration Particulars of at least "Small-Scale" (Building & Industrial Plant)
 Financial Statement: Should be completed within the last five (5) years (2001 to present) at least one (1) project involving construction, renovation or repair of buildings, with a value of at least P1,000,000.00 (one million pesos) and completed within the last five (5) years (2001 to present). The project should be a part of a larger project, involving the construction of a building or other structure. The project should be a part of a larger project, involving the construction of a building or other structure. The project should be a part of a larger project, involving the construction of a building or other structure.

Certification of Satisfactory Performance:
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Other Financial Contracting Capacity or:
 Credit Line or Cash Deposit Certificate
 Letter of Intent (LOI)
 Declaration of Substantial Eligibility Statement Form
 Copy of Financial Statement
 Declaration of Substantial Eligibility Statement Form
 Declaration of Substantial Eligibility Statement Form

Submission and Opening of Bids:
 Date of Submission: April 21, 2006 / 10:00 AM
 Location: BAC Office, 2nd Floor, BSP Main Complex, A. Mabini Ave., P. O. Box 100, Manila

For complete details, please call BAC Secretariat - Tel. 524-7011 local 2142.

The review for the execution and submission of Letters of Intent, accompanied by eligibility statements and bid documents, shall be held at the BAC Office, 2nd Floor, BSP Main Complex, A. Mabini Ave., P. O. Box 100, Manila.

The schedule of bid activities from the issuance of notice of eligibility to the opening of bids is as follows:

1. Issuance of Eligibility Forms: April 21, 2006 / 10:00 AM to April 24, 2006 / 10:00 AM

2. Receipt of Eligibility Requirements: April 25, 2006 / 10:00 AM to April 27, 2006 / 10:00 AM

3. Issuance of Bidding Documents: April 28, 2006 / 10:00 AM to May 1, 2006 / 10:00 AM

4. Submission and Opening of Bids: May 2, 2006 / 10:00 AM

5. Award of Contract: May 3, 2006 / 10:00 AM

(Sgd.) JUAN DE LA CRUZ, JR.
Chairman

(PDI - March 24 & 31, 2006)



FROM MILITARY MACHINE TO FISH SANCTUARY
The US Navy plans to sink this famed Vietnam-era aircraft carrier Oriskany this May as the world's largest intentionally-created reef.

EU blacklists 95 unsafe airlines

BRUSSELS—THE EUROPEAN Union approved Wednesday a first-ever joint blacklist of nearly 100 mostly African airlines considered to be unsafe, in a move spurred by a spate of fatal crashes last year.

The list, which goes into effect on Saturday, bans 92 airlines from flying EU skies all together and puts restrictions on another three from flying certain types of airplanes into the 25-nation bloc.

"The European Union now has a coherent approach to banning airlines," Transport Commissioner Jacques Barrot said.

"This blacklist will keep dubious airlines out of Europe. It will also make sure that all airlines operating in Europe's sky meet the highest safety standards."

EU member states were stung into action after a string of deadly accidents last year that highlighted the fragmented approach to air safety in the 25-nation bloc.

The blacklist will work on the principle that an airline banned in one EU member will be outlawed in the whole bloc and the European Commission is to be charged with keeping the roster up to date.

Most of the carriers on the list are

based in Africa and there are blanket bans on airlines from the Democratic Republic of Congo, Sierra Leone, Equatorial Guinea, Liberia and Swaziland.

The few companies not from Africa are based in Afghanistan, Kyrgyzstan, North Korea and Thailand.

Although some of the banned companies do not currently fly to the EU, the list will have a "preventive effect" by keeping them from trying to enter the European market in the future by such means as offering their planes for charter flights, said Barrot's spokesperson Stefan De Ryck.

However, the commission said that it was considering making aid available to countries whose airlines figure on the list to help improve security.

"We are ready to consider financial aid, within the framework of development aid, to help these companies get up to date on security rules," Development Commissioner Louis Michel said.

To draw up the list, member states submitted their individual roster of companies considered unsafe and experts then voted on which airlines should be included on an overall EU list.

AFP

WORLD BRIEFS

Gambia says it foiled coup plot

BANJUL—Gambia's government said on Wednesday it had uncovered a coup plot led by the country's defense chief and arrested most of those involved, except the military ringleader who was on the run. An official statement announced the conspiracy in the tiny West African country after President Yahya Jammeh had cut short a trip to Mauritania late on Tuesday and returned home. The government named new defense and intelligence chiefs in an apparent purge of the top security posts in the impoverished former British colony, which depends on peanut farming, fishing and tourism for its livelihood. The tiny state is a narrow silver strip along the Gambia river sandwiched between north and south halves of Senegal. Opponents accuse Jammeh of a range of human rights abuses as well as rigging previous elections. He opened his campaign for the 2001 presidential polls by saying he had already won and threatening to shoot anyone who disrupted polling.

Afghan Christian convert faces death

KABUL—Under mounting international pressure over the case of a man facing the death penalty for converting to Christianity, Afghanistan said on Wednesday its judiciary alone would decide the case. US President George W. Bush said he was deeply troubled by the case of Abdur Rahman, who an Afghan judge said this week had been jailed for converting from Islam to Christianity and could face the death penalty if he refused to become a Muslim again. Death is one of the punishments stipulated by Sharia, or Islamic law, for apostasy. The Afghan legal system is based on a mix of civil and Sharia law. "We in Afghanistan have the prosecutor who observes the law and the court that executes it. Whatever the court orders will be executed as the court is independent," said Maharruddin Baluch, a religious affairs adviser to President Hamid Karzai.

Reuters

Fat man walking

NEW YORK—Steve Vaught's quest to shed the dozens of kilos of fat he was lugging around began with a single step, as did his one-man expedition to cross America on foot. Vaught, who began his trek last April in Oceanside, California, has so far covered more than 3,700 km—the last leg to New York with freezing Midwestern winds snapping at his back. As the miles have mounted, so too has interest in Vaught, a sort of slow-motion, portly, country-crossing Forrest Gump doppelganger. Supporters have tracked his progress through his website, logging hundreds of thousands of hits, while others have watched him interviewed on Oprah Winfrey's TV show. In America, where obesity has become a national concern, his appeal is as broad as he is heavy when he began the journey he hoped would help not only shed pounds, but the mindset that led to his weight gain. The 39-year-old ex-Marine, who is married and has two children, said on his blog earlier this month: "When I first started this walk I weighed around 184.5 kg and I was carrying an 85-kg backpack." Crossing Ohio, some six weeks from his goal to reach New York, he wrote: "Now I weigh 133 kg and I am carrying a pack that weighs only 13.5 kg. That is an overall reduction of almost 79 kg off of my feet. So it will only get easier from here."

AP

US student nets \$1M from poker tourney

ST PAUL, Minnesota—Newly minted poker millionaire Mike Schneider has one regret about how he spent his spring break. He didn't get to see much of the Caribbean. But Schneider has a million other reasons to be happy. The 22-year-old University of Minnesota student won \$1 million in a high-stakes Limit Hold'em poker tournament on a Caribbean cruise last Friday. Instead of exploring the Cayman Islands with the other passengers during the eight-day cruise, Schneider holed up on board, slept in and relaxed in the sun so he would be in good form for the nail-biting tournament, which lasted five to eight hours a day. The soft-spoken student has been playing poker professionally for a couple of years, but he took the cruise with a group of buddies to relax—not play. He ended up borrowing some of the \$10,500 he needed to buy into the PartyPoker.com Million V tournament.

AP

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The WORLD

Editor Luverne B. Gueco

Bird flu pandemic seen not imminent



ROOSTER in cage: Not so fearsome!

NEW YORK—TWO GROUPS OF RESEARCHERS, in Japan and in Holland, say they have discovered why the avian flu virus is rarely if ever transmitted from one person to another.

The reason, the researchers propose, is that the cells bearing the type of receptor the avian virus is known to favor are clustered in the deepest branches of the human respiratory tract, keeping it from spreading by coughs and sneezes. Human flu viruses typically infect cells in the

upper respiratory tract.

The avian virus would need to accumulate many mutations in its genetic material before it could become a pandemic strain, said Yoshihiro Kawaoka, a virologist at the University of Tokyo and the University of Wisconsin.

According to a University of

Wisconsin news release approved by Kawaoka, "The finding suggests that scientists and public health agencies worldwide may have more time to prepare for an eventual pandemic."

Kawaoka's finding is being published in Thursday's issue of *Nature*, and a similar finding, by Thijs Kuiken and colleagues at the Erasmus Medical Center in Rotterdam, Netherlands, appears in this week's *Science*.

Flu experts already knew that people who contract the current

avian flu virus, a type known as A (H5N1) or H5 for short, are infected in the lower lung.

Paul A. Offit, a virologist at the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia, said the new reports helped explain why the H5 virus, though it can infect people, does not easily spread from one person to another.

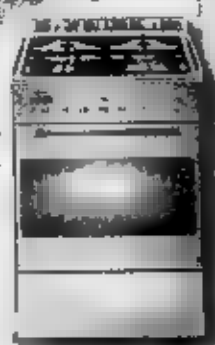
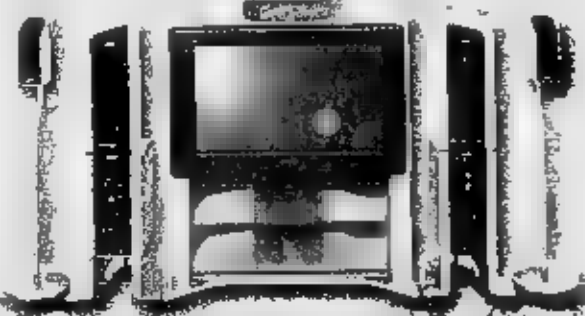
Virologists agree that a flu pandemic will happen sooner or later as one of the 16 types of flu virus in the animal world, probably one that infects birds, will man-

age to switch hosts, and grow and spread in humans. But they differ over whether H5 is the likeliest candidate to make such a switch.

The H5 virus has been present in the human population since the late 1950s, said Offit of Children's Hospital, but has never acquired the full set of mutations needed to set off a pandemic. Such epidemiological evidence "should make us feel safe that there's a substantial barrier," he said, noting the small number of people who have been infected. **NYT**



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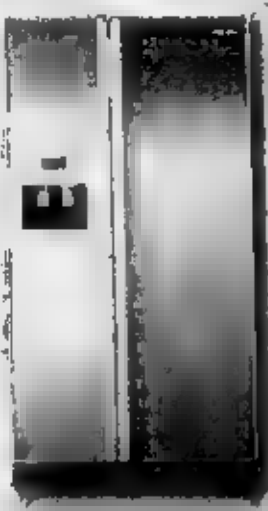
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YOUNG supporters of Belarus' opposition leader Alexander Milinkevich take part amid freezing weather in a rally in central Minsk, Belarus, March 23.

Overnight vigils protesting vote defy Belarus authorities

MINSK, BELARUS—BY MIDNIGHT, AS THE temperature dropped ever lower and morning twilight was still five hours off, the core of Belarus' public opposition assumed its shape in the darkness.

It was about 300 people, arms interlocked and forming a small, dense square, stomping on the frozen ground under a police cadre's contemptuous gaze. Behind them, inside their human box, another group of demonstrators held their banned flags overhead, a thicker of banners over 20 small tents. At any moment, the demonstrators said, they expected the police to rush forward, beat them with clubs and drag them off to the detention cells. And then their protest would end in blood.

All of them said they were ready. "They may attack and beat us and inflict great trauma," said Stepan Svidersky, 18, a student. "But we have already achieved a result: We have shown our country that we are not afraid to stand against arbitrary rule."

Since a rigged presidential election on March 19, the capital of Belarus has seen a protest like none in 12 years of President Alexander G. Lukashenko's autocratic grip. For four consecutive days, protesters have defied warnings of arrest and bloodshed and stood in a corner of October Square to demand a new race.

Their numbers rise to several thousand each evening, as they form a rally and impromptu dance party on the edge of an ice rink, and then dwindle, hour by hour, until midnight, when this core stands through the night, in two lines, to hold the place for the next day.

Mostly they are young men in their 20s. A few look too young to shave. But since Tuesday night, when the opposition's leaders began to disagree about how best to proceed in their effort to unseat a president they do not recognize, this all-night core has become an independent force in a quixotic struggle.

After midnight, the protesters occupied a portion of Belarus, a country of 10 million people the size of Kansas, that was no larger than a 50-yard square.

It was a country within. They danced on its cold stone. They handed out tea. They said they would not give it up.

"We consider this camp to be the only means to defend our position," Vitaly Ko-

rotysh, 22, one of the coordinators of the rally, said at 3:30 a.m. "If necessary it will stand for years. And if they break it up, I think on the next day the people will be back." **NYT**

How not to freeze or be arrested while on protest

MINSK—HOW TO SPEND THE NIGHT in a protest rally and not freeze, or bring food to protestors and not be molested by the police? Ask those Belarusian websites not yet shut down by the authorities.

As hundreds of mostly young people camped out on the main square of Minsk to protest the Sunday election that saw authoritarian President Alexander Lukashenko claim victory, many people were afraid to bring out water and food for fear of being arrested, the United Civilian party website said.

"Do not be rude when the police are around, do not provoke them to use force. If food and thermal containers are confiscated, ask the police to protocol it, as it is your personal property. You can record your conversation with them, but warn them beforehand," the website advised.

As for those already out in the square but seeking not to freeze, philosopher Valentin Akudovich shared his own experience in the tent camp on the Khopits (Enough!) website.

According to Akudovich, protesters should cover and line tents with plastic, make sure they have warm blankets, several pairs of socks and drink hot tea, coffee or gravy to keep from freezing.

They should also sleep in a warm hat, preferably a knit one, with their head to the tent flap so that they could get out quickly in case of attack, Akudovich added. **AFP**

Wal-Mart to hire 150,000 in China

SHENZHEN, CHINA—WAL-MART STORES Inc. plans to hire 150,000 people in China over the next five years, five times the number it currently employs here, as it prepares for a major store expansion.

Joe Hatfield, chief executive of Wal-Mart Asia, who has worked at the world's biggest retailer for more than 30 years and was its first employee in China in 1994, said on Sunday the company plans to open 20 stores in the country this year and is racing to train more staff so that it can speed up growth.

"We're really going to ramp this up," Hatfield told Reuters in an interview while touring stores

in Shenzhen, Wal-Mart's China headquarters.

The Bentonville, Arkansas-based retailer currently has 56 stores in China, putting it behind other global chains such as France's Carrefour, which had 78 at the end of 2005.

Wal-Mart did not even register enough sales to crack the top 30 on the Ministry of Commerce list of the biggest retailers in China, released last month.

That looks set to change. "We're going to be growing in all directions," Hatfield said, adding that new stores were planned for both the major metropolises and the smaller cities. **Reuters**

BASKETBALL: NBA—

Clippers vs Grizzlies;

9 a.m. (7-10 p.m.);

STAR Sports—Up-

and-com ng LA and

Memphis take on each other in the west

FOOTBALL: Spanish Football League, 12 noon; ES-

PN—Barcelona takes on Getafe

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Off-form Gin Kings attempt to snap slide

LOSING IS BAD ENOUGH AS IT IS.

But the way Barangay Ginebra has dropped its last two games makes this losing streak hurt even more.

The Gin Kings, a high-profile, high-scoring side who have been way off target the past week, seek to put a stop to the bleeding tonight when they battle Air21 in the Gran Matador Brandy-PBA Philippine Cup eliminations at the Cuneta Astrodome.

Held to an average of just 57.5 points in its last two games, Ginebra is on an alarming tailspin after opening with two straight wins.

San Miguel Beer mangled the Kings, taking a 77-59 victory, before Purefoods took its turn and encoun-

STANDINGS	W	L
Coca-Cola	4	0
Purefoods	3	2
Red Bull	2	1
Alaska	2	2
San Miguel	2	2
Ginebra	2	2
Talk 'N Text	1	2
Sta Lucia	1	3
Air21	1	3

GAMES TODAY

(Cuneta Astrodome)

4:40 p.m.—Alaska

vs Talk 'N Text

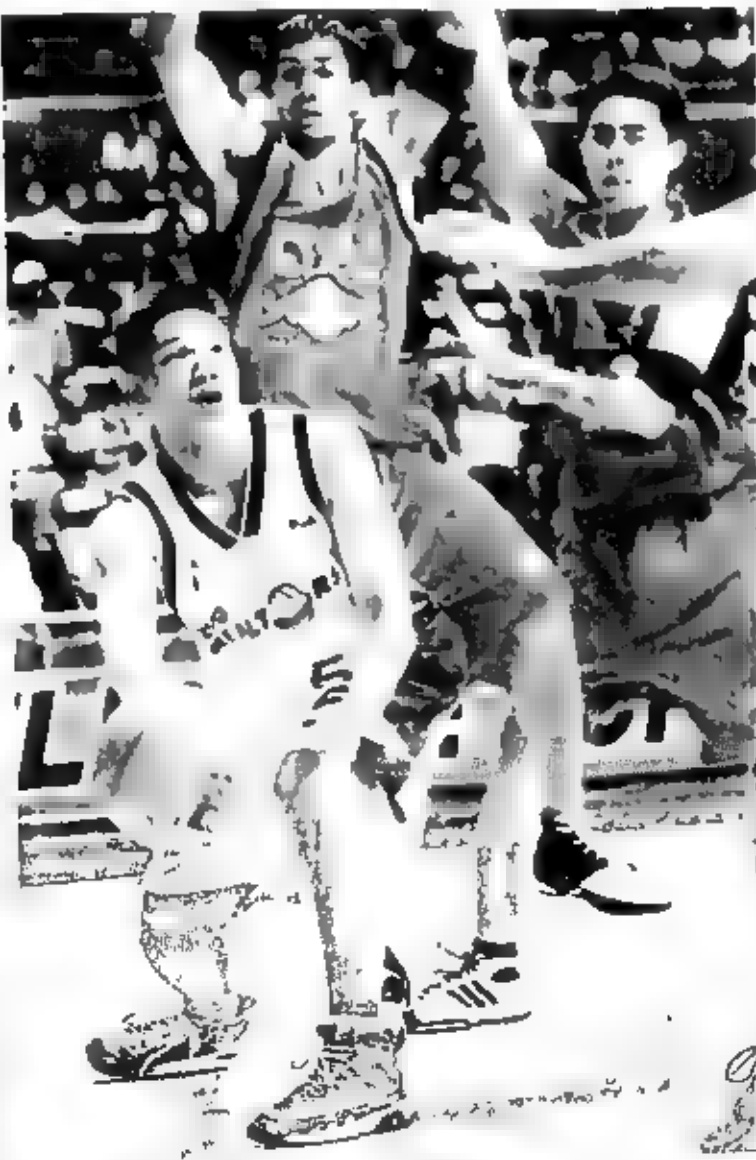
7:35 p.m.—Ginebra

vs Air21

tered token resistance in a 73-56 decision Wednesday night.

Those two Ginebra losses established season-low marks in scoring, and the Kings need to recover fast, starting with their 7:35 p.m. collision with the Express, to restore confidence in their psyche and put themselves back in the company of the elite teams in the upper half of the standings.

Meanwhile, Talk 'N Text, after finally winning Sunday afternoon in Hong Kong, guns for two in a row when the Phone Pals



RED Bull's Cyns Bagulo and Larry Fonacier harass SLR's Alex Cabagnot under the basket during Wednesday's game won by the Bulls, 104-90.

tangle with dangerous Alaska in the 4:40 p.m. curtain-raiser. Coach Derrick Pumaren has been harping about transforming Talk 'N Text into a defense-oriented team, but the Phone Pals have yet to flaunt it three games into the tournament. The first Talk 'N Text win came

because of high-powered offense, thanks to Asi Taulava, Jimmy Amapag and Willie Miller who treated overseas Filipino workers in the former British territory to a wonderful scoring display. Alaska will be coming off a victory over Air21.

June Navarro

POC to seek crucial meeting with Arroyo

By Marc Anthony Reyes

THE COUNTRY'S TOP SPORTS officials will seek a make-or-break meeting with First Gentleman Jose Miguel "Mike" Arroyo next week in a bid to woo him back as chief fund-raiser of the Philippine campaign in the Asian Games in Qatar, this December.

Philippine Olympic Committee secretary general Steve Hontiveros yesterday said the decision was prompted by Mr. Arroyo's failure to respond to the letter of appeal they sent him two weeks ago.

Hontiveros said POC president Jose "Peping" Cojuangco and first vice president and chief Malacañang link Rep. Monico Puentevella will be joined by Philippine Sports Commission chair Butch Ramirez in the meeting which could affect the

country's preparation for the Asiad.

Mr. Arroyo recently announced his decision to stop raising funds for the country's athletes in the wake of criticisms he received for rewarding the gold medalists of the last Southeast Asian Games with a trip to Hong Kong and for joining the celebration atop the ring following Manny Pacquiao's win over Erik Morales in the US last January.

The First Gentleman earlier raised P160 million for the SEAG campaign last December which proved key to the country's breakthrough overall victory in the 11-nation biennial competition.

Puentevella said the country's Asiad preparation is in danger because there are no funds yet for the international exposure of some 100 athletes expected to see action in the Qatar capital, Doha.

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Paras suits up for UP again

BENJIE PARAS, THE only man to win both top rookie and MVP honors in the PBA in the same year, suits up for University of the Philippines Maroons in the Total Filoil-Flying V Homegrown Cup that gets off the ground tomorrow at the San Juan gym.

Paras, who was both Rookie of the Year and MVP in 1989, will be joined in the UP lineup by Yeng Guiao, the Red Bull coach.

Letran and La Salle clash in the alumni game that precedes the high school encounter between Ateneo and San Beda.

Globe and Shell Aviation, Fuels and Asphalt are the sponsors of the tournament which is also backed by Sunbolt, Immuvit, Accel, Gerry's Grille, Bank of Commerce, Banco de Oro, Security Bank, X-24, Millennium Plans, PBCom and Solar Sports.

The weekend tournament offers P80,000 to the champion and P40,000 to the runner-up. Former La Salle coach Virgil Villavicencio is commissioner, Anthony Sunray is project head and David Dulan is league chair.

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Valencia, Iligan part ways

VALENCIA CITY—SOUTHERN DIVISION leaders Valencia Golden Harvest and Iligan Crusaders part ways in the 2006 National Basketball Conference when they clash at 6 p.m. today at the city gym here.

The presence of experienced players like last year's MVP Christian Nictao, Derrick Hubalde and Marion Kalaw makes the Firefly Lightnings-backed Crusaders of Mayor Lawrence Cruz the favorites to prevail.

The Golden Harvest of Mayor Jose Galario Jr. pins its hopes on 2003 NBC Find of the Year Julius Navales, 6-foot-7 Nat Cruz

and rookie Fili-Am Bo Cummings, a 6-foot-5 center from the University of Manila Hawks.

"It's good that we are hosting them and not the other way around," said Valencia mentor Arvin Martinez.

Valencia beat expansion team Pagadian, 80-77, last week at the opening of the southern tournament, while the Crusaders, managed by Freddie Siao, toppled the North Cotabato Braves of Gov. Manny Pinal, 96-78, in their home debut.

Spring Cooking Oil-Parafique and Batang Tagaytay lead the northern division.



HANS Rey displays his wares.

World bike champ struts stuff in RP cycling exhibit

By Jasmine W. Payo

WORLD CHAMPION RIDER HANS REY will show what he can do with the bike at the first Philippine Cycling Exhibit at 4 p.m. on Sunday at the Powerplant Mall in Rockwell, Makati City.

The demo will be the highlight of a three-day bike exhibit that will start tomorrow. The cycling show will feature sports equipment, from road bikes to BMX to mountain bikes. Memorabilia

such as jerseys and posters signed by pros and world champions will be on display.

Mechanics and technical experts will be on tap to answer questions on bike maintenance and riding techniques in the event presented by the Terry Larrazabal Bike Festival and Powerbikes.

Inducted to the Mountain Biking Hall of Fame in 1999, the 39-year-old Rey—nicknamed "No Way Rey"—has been performing in stunts in over 40 countries including events such as the X-Games.



JOSEPHINE Calra of FEU dives to return a spike against La Salle in yesterday's Nestea Beach Volley match at La Salle Green Hills.

Benilde, FEU gain semis

DEFENDING CHAMPION ST BENILDE AND 1999 titlist Far Eastern U booked the final two Luzon berths to the Boracay stage of the 10th Nestea Beach Volley Championships after bouncing back from losses in their morning matches yesterday.

St. Benilde stopped the University of the Philippines, 25-21, after bowing to St. Francis of Assisi, 25-17, while FEU made up for a 25-21 loss to Adamson in the morning with a 25-21 decision

of La Salle at the La Salle Green Hills sand court.

Both wound up with 3-1 records to advance to the semifinals of the annual event set May 4 to 6.

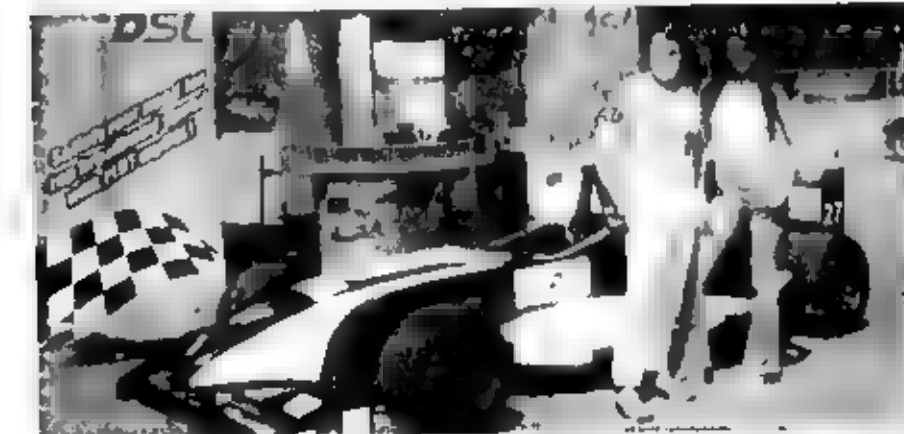
St. Francis and Adamson swept their first three assignments to secure the first two Luzon slots. The Doves and the Falcons were disputing the Luzon championship at presstime.

The four squads actually represented Luzon last year in the tournament that offers P100,000 each to the men's and women's champions.

University of Baguio, Letran, St. Benilde and 2002 champion Adamson cornered the slots for Luzon in women's play.

University of Baguio tripped Adamson, 25-21, while Letran sealed its first trip to the national finals with a 25-15 win over St. Benilde, which bounced back with an afternoon victory, 25-20, over Philippine Christian, to make it.

Adamson also recovered and advanced with a 25-15 win over University of Santa Tomas.



HEAD TURNER

The formula 3 car of Asian Formula Three young gun Dado Peña makes heads turn in the recent Concorso Filipino at the Enrique Zobel field of the Manila Polo Club in Makati City. Concorso Filipino is an annual showcase of exotic and sports cars. Peña, shown with 2005 Ms AF-3 Charmagne de Guzman, will drive anew for Team Goddard in this year's AF3 circuit starting May 6-7 at the Batangas Racing Circuit in Rosario, Batangas, under the banner of PLDT Mypad (www.mypad.net). PLDT myDSL, MOF, Hanjin, Pena y Cia and Speedzone. An international cast that includes defending champion Ananda Mikola of Indonesia and former champion Christian Jones are again seeing action in the much-awaited series.

SPORTSWATCH

Teams welcome in Coach E cagefest

SCHOOL, VILLAGE AND CLUB TEAMS CAN JOIN THE COACH E SUMMER Basketball Tournament slated May 2 at clubside in Libis, Quezon City, and at Xavier School in Greenhills, San Juan. The organizing International Basketball Academy said individual entries and small groups have already registered for the tournament. IBA president Xavy Nunag yesterday said there will be a separate 11-and-under division in the tournament which mainly caters to cagers from 6 to 16 years old. Nunag said another registration day is set this Saturday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the clubside. Interested individuals and groups may call 631-1195 or 0921 7562639. Participants will also get a taste of the personalized Coach E approach in the three-day clinic set April 22, 23 and 27.

Southwoods tennis camp starts April 1

THE MANILA SOUTHWOODS TENNIS CAMP OPENS

its new season on April 1 with former RP Davis Cup team coach Manny Tecson as lead instructor. The annual camp, sponsored by the FI-Estate Sports Foundation Inc. and Splash Island Water Park in cooperation with Metro Rail Transit, the Manila Times, Accel Gasped Motor Shop and Wilson Sports, is aimed at developing a new generation of tennis players through extensive and scientific training at The Manila Southwoods Sports Club in Cammona, Cavite. The academy has produced world-ranked juniors and national champions for the past eight years. For inquiries, call (046) 430-0260, (02) 938-9522 or (02) 939-4851. Classes for beginners, intermediate, advance and competitive will be from April 1 to 26 for the first batch and from May 2 to 28 for the second. Training fees are P3,500.



MANNY Tecson

70 fights scheduled today in Pasay

ANOTHER BANNER CROWD IS EXPECTED TODAY IN THE "BL GEMINI" Magie 4-Cock Derby which blasts off at 6 p.m. at the Pasay City Cockpit with 70 matches on tap. The derby is sponsored by Sagupaan Complex 3000 and hosted by 2006 World Slasher Cup runner-up Maj. Bobby Doronai and Boy Layag of Pampanga. Topnotch cockers from the PCGA, GCAP and PCAP are entered in the event. For inquiries, call 843-1890, 843-1746 or 818-6750.

Bicol entry rules Roligon 'Largahan'

BICOL NEWCOMER CYRUS HAO WON A TOYOTA VIOS AFTER HIS ENTRY "Colleen" posted the fastest winning time in the Largahan 5-Cock Derby at the Roligon Mega Cockpit recently. Colleen timed 21 seconds flat in winning a fight during the derby's championship round last March 18. Nine other cockers emerged as co-champions. Host Roligon will next stage the "Tukuan 5-Cock Derby" on April 29, May 2, 4 and 6 with a cash pot of P2 million and a Toyota Innova at stake. For inquiries, call 851-2275, 833-1638 or 852-9812.

SJC cockfest stakes \$5 Honda bikes

FIVE BRAND-NEW HONDA XRM MOTORCYCLES WILL BE UP FOR GRABS IN THE "Fastest Win One-Cock Jutan" which kicks off on April 1 at the San Juan Coliseum. Host Alba Badiola said a cash pot of P574,000 will be given to the winners regardless of the actual number of entries. Entry fee is P2,200 in the cockfest sponsored by Sagupaan Complex 3000. The fastest win champion will get a Honda XRM plus P50,000; second to fifth placers, one Honda XRM each. For inquiries, call 0917-8264018, 725-6563 or 725-5369.



FIGHT VS ILLEGAL BOOKIES: In a show of unity and cooperation, sectors in the local horse racing industry, led by Marho president Benhur Abalos (seventh from left), have joined forces with Congress and law enforcement agencies in the campaign against the proliferation of illegal "bookies." Joining the crusade are (from left) PRCI EVP Ramon Ereneta Jr., Marho director Butch Mamon, MJC president Alfonso Reyno Jr., Marho director Elias Chua, PNP Chief Supt. Antonio Nanas, GAB chair Eric Buhain, Marho chair Sandy Javier (partially hidden), NBI director Reynaldo Esmeralda, Philracom commissioner Eduardo Jose and Marho director Jake Maderaza.

Marho spearheads drive against illegal bookies

THE FIGHT TO WIPE OUT ILLEGAL BOOKIES in local horseracing got a big boost recently with the industry's leading players and key law enforcement agencies agreeing to work together.

The Metropolitan Association of Race Horse Owners (Marho), through its president Rep. Benhur Abalos, is taking the lead in this ambitious drive to rid the industry of the bookies and make horseracing reach its full potential.

Several prominent members of Congress, the Games and Amusements Board, the National Bureau of Investigation, the Philippine Racing Commission, the Philippine National Police and officials of the San Lazaro and Santa Ana racetracks have agreed to support the move.

"I am confident that with the combined efforts of the various industry sectors, the support of Congress and the law enforcement agencies, our goal of eradicating illegal bookies in horse racing may finally be realized," said Abalos.

Abalos made a presentation of the major prob-

lems confronting the horse racing industry while outlining a series of recommendations that could be carried out by various industry sectors.

Included was a proposal for all groups within the industry to police their own ranks and bar known bookie personalities and patrons from becoming members.

Jockeys and trainers found to be consorting with bookie personalities will be deprived of the benefits of the Jockeys and Trainers' Funds.

The two race clubs were also asked to conduct a regular review of the performance of the Board of Racing Stewards and provide new incentives and safeguards to prevent the OTBs from being used as fronts of illegal bookie operations.

Also present during the presentation were Caloocan City Rep. Luis "Baby" Assistio and Oscar Malapitan, Philracom commissioners Eduardo Jose, Verge Cruz and Eduardo Domingo Jr., and new Philippine Jockeys Association head Domingo Vaeal. With a report from Musong R. Castillo

Race 1—(Ort/Tri)—Manila Magic (4), Karma (2), Better Strike (3), Speed Admirer (9)
Race 2—(Ort/Tri)—Orelly (4), Double Your Bet (3), Mr. Lucas (5), Princess Adair (2)
Race 3—(Ort/Tri)—Aryann (1), Angel of Light (6), Hidden Pleasure (3), Coquer D'Sun (2)
Race 4—(Penta/Ort/Tri)—Golden Number (5), Santiago/Dona Nena (3), Alvendo (4), Mighty Story (8), Jada's Magic (1)

RACING TIPS
BY TOP CHOICE

Race 5—(Ort/Tri)—My Sketch (2), Mr. Muske (5), C'Est Moi (8), Cool Turner (4)
Race 6—(Penta/Ort/Tri)—Worth Ur While (3), Apex (1), Tell Henry (10), Virgin Island (6), Sincerely

Race 7—(Ort/Tri)—Heroes/Slouch Ally (2), Victory (5), Dream Craze (1), Hear Me (4)
Race 8—(Penta/Ort/Tri)—Hukom/Tingayngay (8), Silver Dollar (5), Die Out Out (8), Galey's Charm (7), Bear D'Heal (1)
Race 9—(Super B/O/Tri)—Odyssey (12), Key Element (5), Earth Wind N'Fire (1), Sweet Talk (10), Luck Of The Irish (7), Distinctive Dancer/Gun Powder (8)

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Badminton

Amit leads RP challenge in Asian pool tilt

THE PHILIPPINES' FINEST LADY POOL PLAYERS led by double Southeast Asian Games gold medalist Rubilen Amit, will see action in the Eneva International Ladies Championship on April 25-28.

Amit and the rest of the RP team will be struggling it out with the best in the Asian region as the event also aims to prepare Team Philippines for the Qatar Asiad in December.



AMIT

Puyat Sports Inc., Solar Entertainment and Nature's Best Products Inc. put together this tournament to give the lady pool stars an arena to sharpen their skills.

Sixteen players will be seeded to the main draw while the next 16 will be filled up after a two-day qualifying set April 24 and 25 at Paeng's Skybowl.

Rankings will be determined by the entries that sign up and the organizers are expecting no less than two-time world champion Kim Young-ga of Korea, Zhou Mengmen of China and Akimi Kajitani of Japan to play.

The event will be sanctioned by the Asian Confederation of Billiards Sports and the Billiard and Snooker Congress of the Philippines.

It is also the first in a series of events being planned to establish a professional ladies tour in Southeast Asia with legs in Malaysia, Indonesia and Singapore already in the works.



MIAMI'S Shaquille O'Neal (left) takes it on the chin from Detroit's Ben Wallace.

SPORTS

Hot Pistons rip Heat

AUBURN HILLS, MICHIGAN—THE Detroit Pistons overcame their worst shooting performance of the season on Wednesday to beat Eastern Conference rivals Miami, 82-73, in the National Basketball Association.

Tayshaun Prince and Antonio McDyess took over the offense in the decisive fourth quarter as the Pistons rallied for the victory over their potential playoff foes.

Chauncey Billups had 24 points and 10 assists for the Pistons, who fought back from a 12-point third-quarter

106; the Cleveland Cavaliers ripped the Charlotte Hornets in overtime, 120-118; the Indiana Pacers outlasted the Chicago Bulls, 95-85; the Orlando Magic trounced the New York Knicks, 111-87; the Boston Celtics routed the Toronto Raptors, 110-96; the Seattle SuperSonics scuttled the Milwaukee Bucks, 114-105; the Los Angeles Lakers foiled the Sacramento Kings, 87-80; and the Denver Nuggets whipped the San Antonio Spurs, 104-92.

Detroit also used its trademark defense as it limited Miami to 30 points in the second half and silenced Dwyane Wade, who managed 13 points on 3-of-15 shooting.

"That was Detroit basketball," Pistons coach Flip Saunders said. "The more we played against them, the more we understood their sets and we were able to contest their shots. If we play lock-down defense like we did tonight, we can play with these guys."

Both teams downplayed the significance of the game, despite its postseason feel.

"It's no statement. It's just another game," Pistons forward Rasheed Wallace said.

Miami held a 64-62 lead with 8:48 remaining on a follow shot by Shaquille O'Neal, who had 27 points and 10 rebounds.

AFP

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BAP should stop fighting a 'lost cause'

CLEAN LIVING



Manolo R. Inigo

FOR THE SAKE OF the country and the Filipino youth, officials of the Basketball Association of the Philippines headed by former Sen. Joey Lina should stop fighting a "lost cause." Instead, they should accept the fact that their organization is no longer recognized by the Philippine Olympic Committee and that another group, Pilipinas Basketball, is set to take its place.

The BAP on Monday said it would file a case against the POC at the Lausanne-based Court of Arbitration for Sport, an independent but powerful body that settles sports disputes within national Olympic committees. Lina said they were seeking from CAS not only the BAP's reinstatement in the POC but also a "temporary relief so we can participate in the Asian Games in Doha."

Many did not buy the ploy, saying there are rules in sports that must be followed to ensure peace, fairness and sportsmanship. Respect for decisions of officials or those duly authorized to execute these rules must at all times be shown. Otherwise, there will be conflict and confusion.

It is on record that the BAP had neglected its duty to promote and develop the dash-and-dribble sport in recent years. Horrible performances by BAP-organized teams in local and international tournaments recently have offended millions of Filipinos and created a cause for its expulsion from the POC. BAP has no reason to complain after its expulsion nor put the blame on POC president Jose "Peping" Cojuangco Jr. The POC merely implemented the rules governing its authority and mandate under the Olympic Charter. If the BAP was expelled, it was through its own fault.

As a result of the BAP's expulsion, the international basketball federation (Fiba) suspended the Philippines from all Fiba-sanctioned events, including the Southeast Asian Games, the Olympics and the Asian Games.

I have not seen Cojuangco in months, but I agree with him when he batted for a "fresh start" and asked cage officials to "focus more on new ideas and reforms that would redeem the country from the embarrassing output of poor leadership." He added that the POC had met the requirements detailed in the Memorandum of Understanding forged between the POC and the Fiba, represented by its secretary general Patrick Baumann.

The MoU named five stakeholders (PBA, PBL, UAAP, NCAA and Lina) to form a new basketball organization before the end of this month. Four of the five stakeholders have given their go-signal to form the new organization, which they called Pilipinas Basketball, except for Lina who refused to follow the majority.

CONDOLENCE to the family and friends of Leonardo M. Castro, who died recently at the age of 53. The president of Batzan Security Agency. Castro's remains lie at the National Funeral Homes, Araneta. Interment will be at 9 a.m. on Sunday.

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MARIANO G. PLAZA
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Brgy. Cate, Tuguegarao, Cagayan

EARLY D. S. MAGANG
38 yrs. old, Housewife
Brgy. Poblacion, Bacnot, Linao del Norte

ROSALINDA BANTILAN
40 yrs. old, Sales Staff, Owner
Brgy. North View, San Jose City

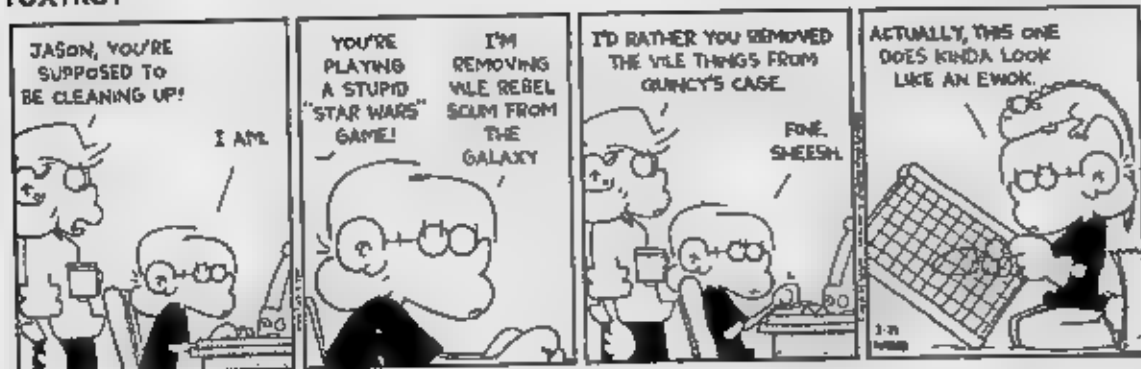
FLORINDA E. BRIGINO
44 yrs. old, Sales Staff, Owner
Linao Quezon City

Thank you to all the participants and congratulations to all the winners!

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BY JESS ABRERA

FOXTROT

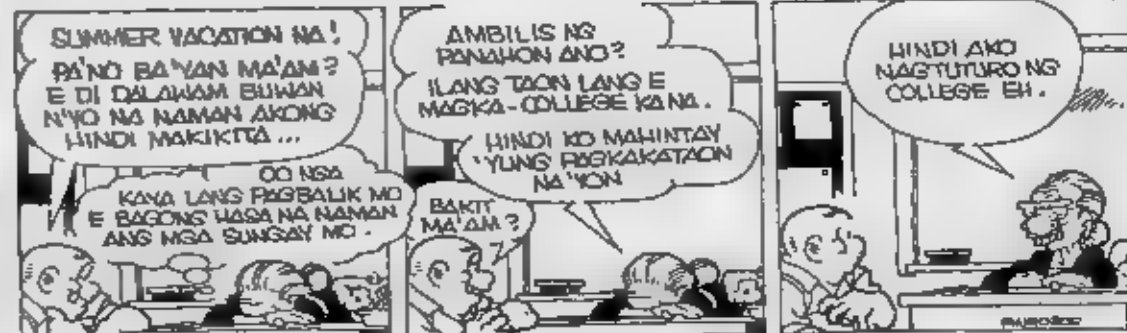


MARVIN

BY TOM ARMSTRONG

PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR

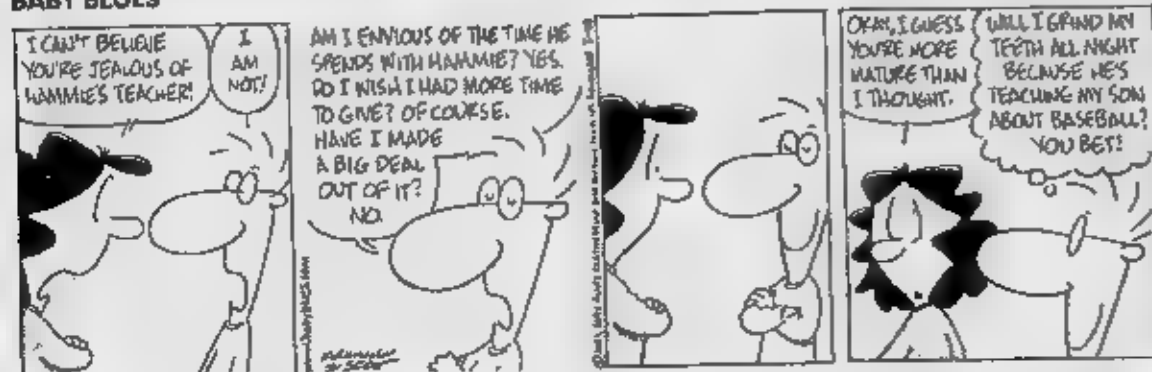


BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT

MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL



ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO

DIVINE COMEDY

BY STEVEN PABALINAS



HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS DRAKE

YOU BORN TODAY: You're friendly, affectionate and always adventurous! You adore exploring fresh turf—anything new! Your spontaneous approach to life brings you constant adventures and new acquaintances. You're bold and yet soft-spoken. Nevertheless, people listen to you. This year might be one of the best years of your life. Go after what you want. Open any door.

Birthdate of: Steve McQueen, actor; David Suzuki, environmentalist; Star Jones, TV personality.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): This is a good day to make long-range plans that affect children, the arts and vacations. Create ways to have some fun! You deserve it! Decide to give yourself a nice holiday. (Commit to this.)

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): Advice from someone older is worth heeding today. After all, you don't have to reinvent the wheel. Why not learn from the mistakes of those who went before you?

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): Make plans connected with publishing, education and travel today. These plans might be for far in the future; nevertheless, it's wise to lay the groundwork now.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): You can be successful working with large institutions and the government today. Domestic matters in particular can be settled. Make sure you take a long-range view of things.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): Discussions with bosses are serious and practical today. People are impressed with your down-to-earth approach to things. Remember, you're a very mechanical sign.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): What can you do today to make your long-term future more secure? Think about the resources of others and how they might benefit you. What about shared property?

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): Someone older or more experienced has some advice for you. Possibly, you are the older, more-experienced individual. Either way, discussions with others are mutually beneficial today.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): Bosses, VIPs, parents and teachers are impressed with your efforts today. You are a strong-willed sign. When you decide to get something done, you do it!

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): Parents can make long-range plans for the education of children today. It's also good time to discuss future vacations and plans for a pleasant

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): Tackle home repairs today. You might want to buy something for your home that is long-lasting and practical. Make future plans about your domestic scene or future real estate possibilities.

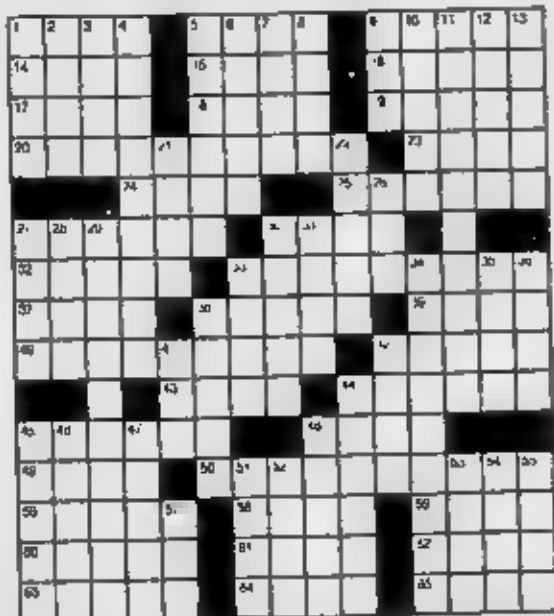
AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): This is an excellent day to sign contracts and conduct important negotiations with others. You won't overlook details. You're in a practical, solid frame of mind.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): This is a good day to begin money-making ventures. If you buy something, it will be practical and long-lasting. You're planning for your financial future now. (An older, more experienced mentor might help you.)

DAILY CROSSWORD

ACROSS

- 1 Gets by
- 5 Additional
- 8 Indy driver
- 14 Duran Duran's type of rock
- 15 Screen symbol
- 16 Winner Zola
- 17 Richard of "Chicago"
- 18 O-Day town
- 19 Slinky
- 20 Vendo phones
- 23 Radar's quaff
- 24 Like a drum
- 25 Finishes
- 27 Pack in a carton
- 30 Leg part
- 32 Ones with visitors
- 33 Good dishes, perhaps
- 37 Pop
- 38 Heels
- 39 Early Coloradoans
- 40 Not quite enough
- 42 Rusty hinge noise
- 43 Challenge
- 44 Top prizes
- 45 Get the wrong sum
- 46 Filmmaker
- 48 Riefenstahl
- 49 God of war
- 50 Be aware of change?
- 58 Act, billically
- 59 Insert ammo
- 59 Capital of Qatar
- 60 Musician Previn
- 61 Zeus consort
- 62 Ukrainian city
- 63 Actress Cicely
- 64 ASPCA part
- 65 Eld



By Robert H. Wolfe

North Woodmere, NY

3/24/06

Monday's Puzzle Solver



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DOWN

- 1 Breakfast staple
- 2 Swiss abstract painter
- 3 English noble
- 4 Had some suspicions

- 5 Slip-up
- 6 Two quarters together
- 7 Throw, as dice
- 8 Hydroxyl compound
- 9 Ring off
- 10 Improve
- 11 Mentions locations
- 12 Secretary of War Root
- 13 Load more seism on one's chip
- 21 Lip
- 22 Tennis champ
- 26 Gridiron division
- 27 Old gas?
- 28 Kind of Dodge
- 29 Surrenders property
- 30 Wendell of "Rear Window"
- 31 Once more
- 32 Neutral shade
- 34 In haste
- 35 With no ice
- 36 Quakes
- 38 Campus girls
- 41 Strange
- 42 Prez's title
- 44 Be sustained by
- 45 Furious with
- 46 Literary device
- 47 Houston player
- 48 Exams for would-be alyss.
- 51 Ms. Fitzgerald
- 52 Negatives
- 53 Hamburg, Brazil
- 54 God of thunder
- 55 Rescue
- 57 Female lobster

HAKAOKOMORI

BY JOMIKE TEJIDO



BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON



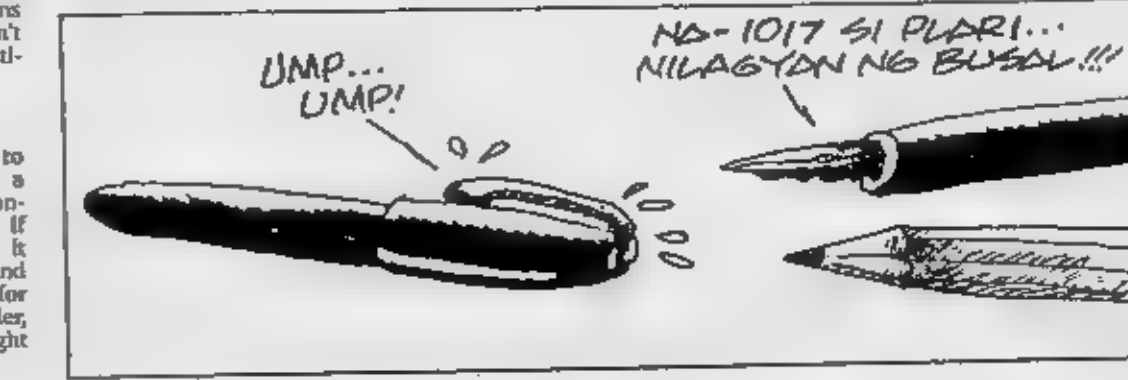
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO



TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING



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Editor Emmie G. Velarde

Gov't offers loans to producers

By Bayani San Diego Jr.

THE GOVERNMENT IS OFFERING LOANS to movie producers.

In an exclusive interview with INQUIRER Entertainment, Rolando "Jacky" Atienza, head of the Film Development Council of the Philippines, announced that the agency will launch the Film Fund next month.

"A business model-financing scheme" was how Atienza described Film Fund. "[It] will offer loans to qualifying producers, in a bid to generate activity in the local film industry."

Since these will be "soft" loans, Atienza said, there will be zero interest. "Basically, repayment will come in the form of the assignment of the ancillary rights (TV/cable, home video sales) to the FDCP for six years."

He added, "[Each loan is pegged at] P5 million or 40 percent of the total project cost, or whichever is lower."

The FDCP is currently drafting the rules that will govern the Film Fund.

"If the producer [eventually] succeeds in selling the ancillary rights [to another party] for the amount of the granted loan—or less—that's OK," he explained. "If the proceeds are higher than the loan, the excess goes to the producer—we will just recover the principal. The producer can also buy back the ancillary rights anytime."

According to Atienza, the core of the Film Fund will come from the Special Fund (SF) raised from the amusement-tax rebates granted by the Cinema Evaluation Board. (Former FDCP head Laurice Guillen earlier said that, at the time of her departure late last year, there was P28 million in the SF.)

"We will start small, with P25 million," Atienza said. "Stimulating activity in the industry will attract new investors."

GOV'T/A2-4

Film council launches financial scheme to generate activity in the industry

INQUIRER EXCLUSIVE

TV soaps lull viewers into inaction

"ASIAN NOVELAS" FROM South Korea and Taiwan are hits on the local TV screen. So many of them are being telecast that some of our own TV people are complaining that they're losing out in terms of job prospects to these Asian "invaders."

True, this is much better than the time, some years ago, when Latin American or Spanish telenovelas held sway on the local boob tube.

At least, these new "invaders" have Asian faces that look closer to ours, while the Spanish

VIEWFINDER



Nestor U. Torre

soaps more clearly fed off our "deathless" colonial mentality.

Another plus point is the Asian telenovelas' fresher approach to dramatization and production. They still resort to melodramatic plot and character clichés, but they sometimes offer up more innovative approaches that challenge their local counterparts to be similarly creative in the way they do things.

Ultimately, however, the TV picture ends up on the dark and negative side, because the Asian shows indulge in

TV/A2-4

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2 ULTRAVIOLET MTRCB PG-13 1:20, 3:30, 5:40, 7:50, 10:00 LMF	4 GLORY ROAD MTRCB GP 2:00, 4:40, 7:20, 10:00 LMF

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1 NORTH COUNTRY 11:55, 2:45, 5:35, 8:25, 11:15 R-13	2 ULTRAVIOLET 12:05, 2:15, 4:25, 6:35, 8:45, 11:00 PG-13
3 NANNY MCPHEE 1:20, 3:45, 6:10, 8:35, 11:00 G	4 GLORY ROAD 12:30, 2:10, 5:50, 8:30, 11:00 I

Empowered, empowering

FRIDAY, MARCH 24, 2006

By Oliver M. Pulumbart
Contributor

HERON in "North Country"

GENDER issues are unflinchingly addressed in the Charize Theron-starrer "North Country," inspired by the true story of a landmark class action lawsuit against an American mining company's misogynistic work environment almost 20 years ago. Unabashedly an underdog shows 'em-all tearjerker, "North Country" intersperses courtroom drama with lengthy flashbacks that cross-examine Theron's crusading character Josey Aimes and her Minnesota hometown's attitudes about gender roles. But while the picture has many well-timed emotional stimuli in place, it also conveys its female empowerment messages without overt preaching.

To the point
These lessons are made clear from the outset. Josey, raising her two kids by herself, works in the iron mines where her father (Richard Jenkins) has labored for decades. Braving the unglamorous but high-paying job, Josey is finally in control of her life, or so she thinks. Unwelcome in the workplace, she and her female co-workers are the collective butt of jokes for the male miners.

REVIEW
The film's trusty triumvirate of previous Oscar Best Actresses make up a diverse bunch—Theron as the young mother with a checklist of tragedies, Frances McDormand as her gutsy gal pal and Sissy Spacek as Josey's silently suffering mom—and are key representations of very human, very female perspectives. These archetypes have dimensions to their personalities that keep them rightly flawed, so we feel firsthand the odds stacked against them, and women in general.

The storytelling is simple and to the point—we all know where the story's heading—but filmmaker Nik Caro ("Whale Rider") knows how to play to the cast's strengths, so the ride is made as fulfilling as the obvious, vindicating destination. The compelling jigsaw puzzle is slowly but enthusiastically formed with the presence of impeccably cast male scene-stealers, such as Jenkins, Woody Harrelson (as Josey's reluctant but hopeful lawyer) and Sean Bean (as a smart nice guy, for a change).

"North Country" has melodramatic, obviously contrived Oscar hopeful moments, but since the Josey character is primarily more fleshed out because of them, the occasional sappiness is forgivable.

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SHE'S THE MAN PG-13 1:45, 3:55, 6:05, 8:15, 10:25	NANNY MCPHEE G 12:30, 2:50, 5:10, 7:30, 9:50	NORTH COUNTRY R-13 12:15, 2:45, 5:15, 7:45, 10:15
GLORY ROAD G 12:15, 2:45, 5:15, 7:45, 10:15	V FOR VENDETTA R-13 1:30, 4:20, 7:10, 10:00	ULTRAVIOLET PG-13 2:00, 4:00, 6:00, 8:00, 10:00

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3 NORTH COUNTRY 11:45, 2:30, 5:10, 7:50, 10:30 R-13	4 NANNY MCPHEE 11:45, 2:30, 5:10, 7:50, 10:30 GP
5 ULTRAVIOLET 1:45, 4:15, 6:45, 9:15, 11:45 PG-13	

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GLORY ROAD

DAVID BROWNE

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ROUNDUP



PILAR Pilapil, Boots Anson-Roa and Ricardo Cepeda

Pilar's story

SHE has one of the most beautiful faces in show business. And yet actress Pilar Pilapil's recently launched autobiography is titled "The Woman Without a Face."

Pilar's explanation is, she's been through situations that made her feel she couldn't face anyone. She is dedicating the book to young women who are just starting out, so they can learn from her experiences.

The book traces Pilar's life from her childhood in Cebu, through her years as a beauty queen, controversial actress, to what she calls her "redemption."

Essentially, she said, her story is one of "stardom, sin and salvation."

Pilar is promoting her book via a mall tour that kicks off March 31 at National Bookstore Shangri-la and ends April 2 at Powerbooks Alabang. Call 512-1501



WONG Kar-wai

Wong directs Brits

HONG KONG—Acclaimed Hong Kong director Wong Kar-wai has cast British actor Jude Law and Oscar-winner Rachel Weisz in his first English-language movie, reports said Wednesday.

Grammy-winning jazz singer Norah Jones will make her acting debut on the film, which begins shooting in June. Wong was quoted as saying by Apple Daily and the Oriental Daily News.



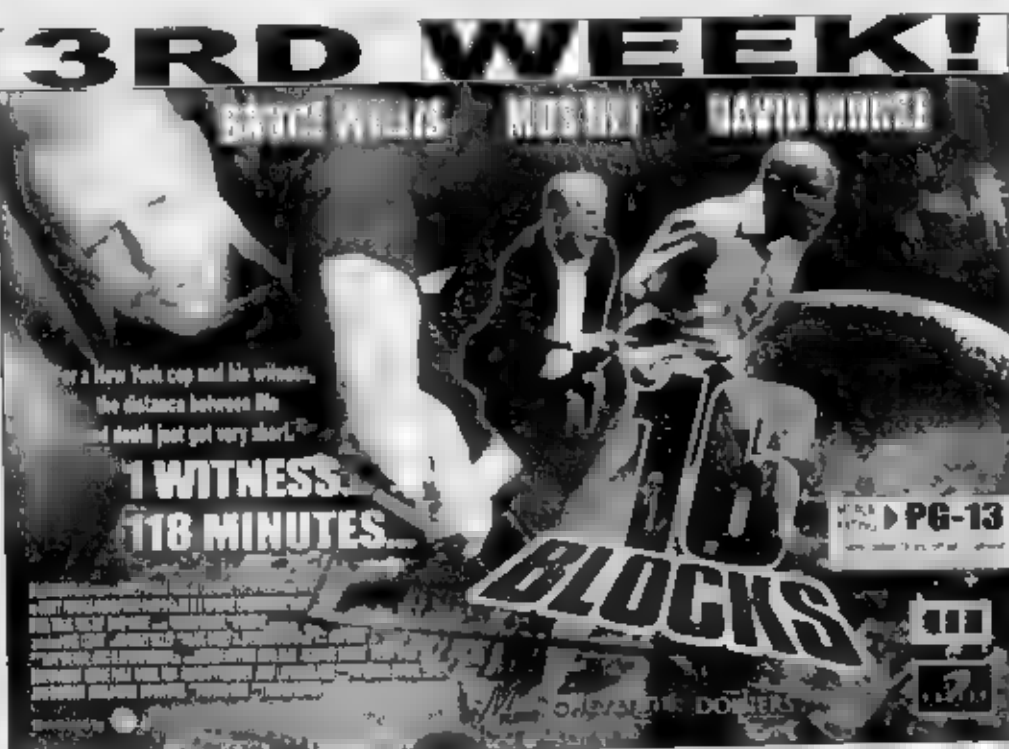
TONY Parker and Eva Longoria

BF knows best

LOS ANGELES—Eva Longoria, desperate to set the record straight, took to the entertainment news shows to tell the world that her beau, NBA star Tony Parker, is aces in the bedroom.

File it under Too Much Information, but Longoria on Tuesday told "Extra" and "Access Hollywood" that "when the lights are out, he's the teacher."

The revelation came in response to an article in the latest *Elle* magazine that quotes the actress as saying that in matters of love, she was "the experienced one." International magazines seized the story, concluding—wrongfully, Longoria stressed—that Parker is a lousy lover.



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MOVIE GUIDE
NOW SHOWING



1 10:00 AM NANNY MCPHEE
2 2:00 PM ULTRAVIOLET
3 3:00 PM SHE'S THE MAN
4 4:00 PM CP

PREMIERE
5 5:00 PM NORTH COUNTRY



1 10:00 AM SHAGGY DOG
2 2:00 PM
3 3:00 PM SHE'S THE MAN
4 4:00 PM V FOR VENDETTA
5 5:00 PM
6 6:00 PM
7 7:00 PM GLORY ROAD
8 8:00 PM
9 9:00 PM NORTH COUNTRY
10 10:00 PM 16 BLOCKS



1 10:00 AM NORTH COUNTRY
2 2:00 PM ULTRAVIOLET
3 3:00 PM
4 4:00 PM

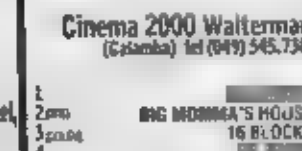
CINEMA 2000



1 10:00 AM V FOR VENDETTA
2 2:00 PM
3 3:00 PM GLORY ROAD
4 4:00 PM ULTRAVIOLET



1 10:00 AM GLORY ROAD
2 2:00 PM NANNY MCPHEE
3 3:00 PM ULTRAVIOLET
4 4:00 PM RESERVED



1 10:00 AM THE DESCENT
2 2:00 PM
3 3:00 PM
4 4:00 PM



1 10:00 AM HOSTEL
2 2:00 PM
3 3:00 PM
4 4:00 PM CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
5 5:00 PM ULTRAVIOLET



1 10:00 AM HOUSE OF FURY
2 2:00 PM ULTRAVIOLET
3 3:00 PM VENDETTA
4 4:00 PM



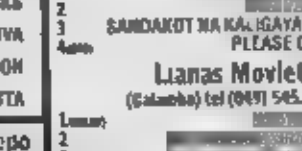
1 10:00 AM THE DESCENT
2 2:00 PM
3 3:00 PM
4 4:00 PM



1 10:00 AM DATE MOVIE
2 2:00 PM
3 3:00 PM FEARLESS



1 10:00 AM CASANOVA
2 2:00 PM
3 3:00 PM FINAL DESTINATION
4 4:00 PM V FOR VENDETTA



1 10:00 AM FEARLESS
2 2:00 PM
3 3:00 PM
4 4:00 PM



1 10:00 AM DATE MOVIE
2 2:00 PM
3 3:00 PM RESERVED



1 10:00 AM HOUSE OF FURY
2 2:00 PM
3 3:00 PM
4 4:00 PM

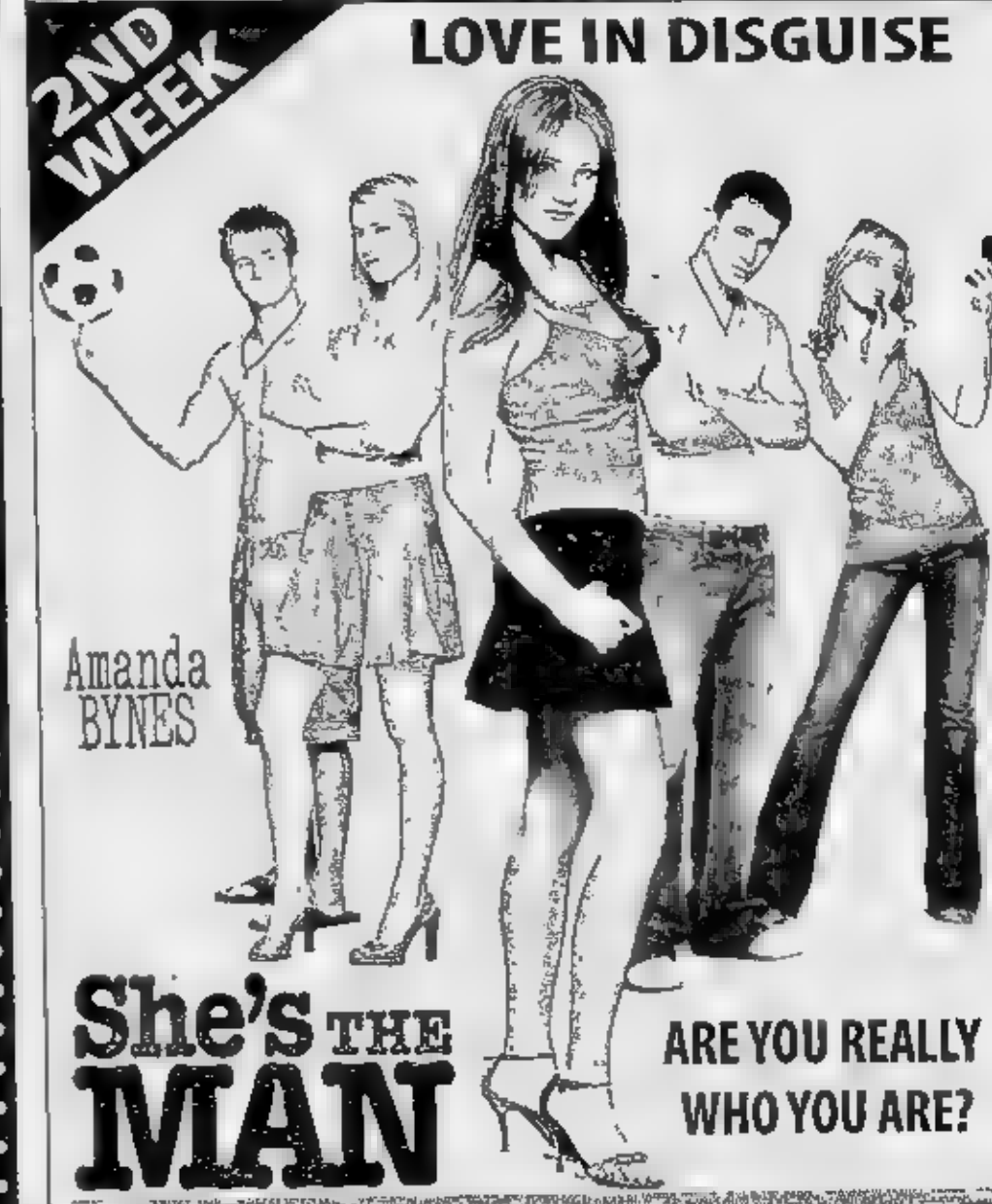


1 10:00 AM CASANOVA
2 2:00 PM
3 3:00 PM
4 4:00 PM

MOVIES / SCHEDULES / PRICES SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE



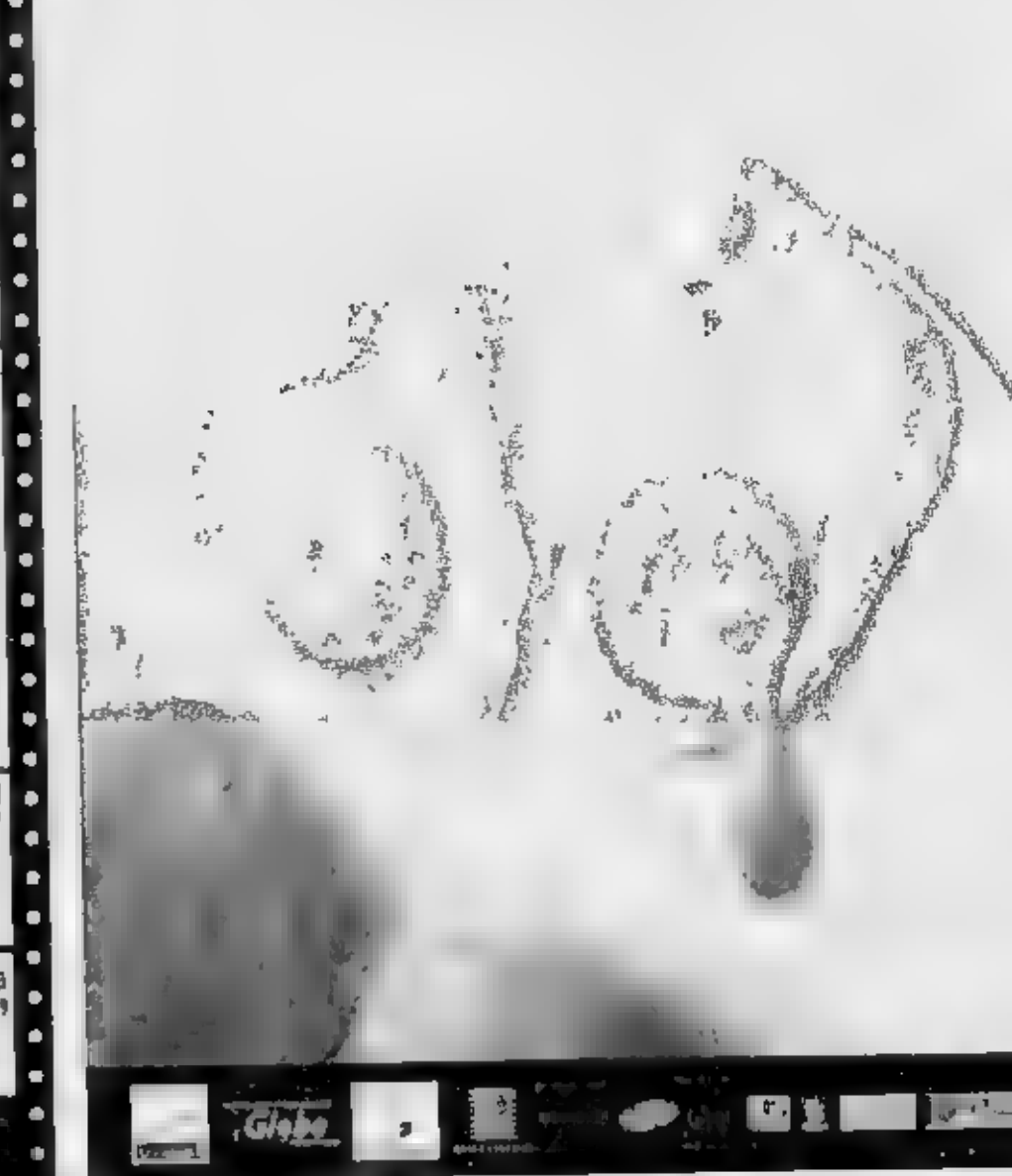
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NORTH COUNTRY 12:30 FS / 12:50 MF / 03:30 08:10 / 08:20 LFS 08:50 LMF / 11:00 END NANNY MCPHEE 02:00 FS / 02:25 MF / 04:35 06:45 / 6:25 LFS 08:00 LMF / 10:40 END	FEARLESS HOUSE OF FURY THE DARK V FOR VENDETTA FINAL DESTINATION 3 GLORY ROAD ULTRAVIOLET NANNY MCPHEE SHE'S THE MAN 16 BLOCKS CLOSE TO YOU SHAGGY DOG	ULTRAVIOLET 16 BLOCKS BIG MOMMA'S HOUSE SHE'S THE MAN NANNY MCPHEE V FOR VENDETTA GLORY ROAD FEARLESS FINAL DESTINATION 3 SHAGGY DOG THE DARK NORTH COUNTRY
SM MEGACINEMA	SM CITY STA. MESA	SM CITY SOUTHMALL
ULTRAVIOLET 10:15 FS / 10:40 MF / 12:30 / 02:20 / 04:10 / 6:00 / 7:50 09:10 LFS / 09:40 LMF 11:10 END V FOR VENDETTA SHE'S THE MAN RESERVED NORTH COUNTRY NANNY MCPHEE FEARLESS SHAGGY DOG 16 BLOCKS FINAL DESTINATION 3 THE DARK GLORY ROAD	ULTRAVIOLET V FOR VENDETTA GLORY ROAD FINAL DESTINATION 3 SHE'S THE MAN FEARLESS NANNY MCPHEE 16 BLOCKS NORTH COUNTRY SHAGGY DOG	ULTRAVIOLET 16 BLOCKS NORTH COUNTRY V FOR VENDETTA NANNY MCPHEE GLORY ROAD SHE'S THE MAN FINAL DESTINATION 3 FEARLESS RESERVED
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SM CITY DASMARINAS	SM CITY SAN LAZARO	CITY
THE DARK UNDERCLASS MAN SHAGGY DOG BIG MOMMA'S HOUSE	ULTRAVIOLET SHAGGY DOG V FOR VENDETTA FINAL DESTINATION 3 SHE'S THE MAN NANNY MCPHEE	HOUSE OF FURY ULTRAVIOLET V FOR VENDETTA 16 BLOCKS

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V FOR VENDETTA HOUSE OF FURY SHAGGY DOG THE DARK	BIG MOMMA'S HOUSE THE DARK FEARLESS AEON FLUX	SHAGGY DOG HOUSE OF FURY V FOR VENDETTA CRY WOLF
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GALLERIA	632-9118
1 NORTH COUNTRY - THX 1:35 4:20 7:05 9:50	6 SHE'S THE MAN 12:20 2:45 5:10 7:35 10:00
2 NANNY MCPHEE 1:00 3:15 5:30 7:45 10:00	7 CO-ED SCANDAL 12:40 3:00 5:20 7:40 10:00
3 GLORY ROAD 11:30 2:05 4:40 7:15 9:50	8 CASANOVA 12:40 3:00 5:20 7:40 10:00
4 V FOR VENDETTA 1:20 4:10 7:00 9:50	9 HOSTEL 1:10 3:20 5:30 7:40 9:50
5 ULTRAVIOLET 11:00 1:10 3:20 5:30 7:40 9:50	10 BROKEBACK MOUNTAIN 1:30 4:20 7:10 10:00

ERMITA	635-7800 to 12
1 NANNY MCPHEE 12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 9:50	5 SHE'S THE MAN 12:00 2:00 4:00 6:00 8:00 10:00
2 HOSTEL 12:30 2:30	6 GLORY ROAD 12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 9:50
V FOR VENDETTA 4:40 7:20 9:50	7 NORTH COUNTRY 12:00 2:30 5:00 7:30 10:00
3 ULTRAVIOLET 12:20 2:20 4:20 6:20 8:25 10:00	
4 CO-ED SCANDAL 12:00 2:00 4:00 6:00 8:00 9:50	

METROEAST	062-8193 / 062-9100
1 HOUSE OF FURY 1:00 3:00 5:00 7:00 9:00	5 HOSTEL 1:00 3:00 5:00 7:00 9:00
2 NANNY MCPHEE 11:45 2:05 4:25 6:45 9:05	6 ULTRAVIOLET 12:10 2:25 4:40 6:55 9:10
3 SHE'S THE MAN 1:40 4:00 6:30 9:00	7 GLORY ROAD 1:00 3:40 6:20 9:00
4 V FOR VENDETTA 1:10 3:50 6:30 9:00	8 CO-ED SCANDAL 12:15 2:00 3:45 5:30 7:15 9:00

NOVALICHES	035-3231 / 035-3238-38
1 ULTRAVIOLET 2 GLORY ROAD 3 HOSTEL	4 V FOR VENDETTA 5 NANNY MCPHEE
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1 HOSTEL 2 TIGER BLADE 3 RESERVE 4 RESERVE	1 NANNY MCPHEE 2 SHE'S THE MAN 3 ULTRAVIOLET 4 GLORY ROAD

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IMUS	075-302 / 075-310	STARMILLS	045-820-8844
1 GLORY ROAD 2 HOSTEL 3 V FOR VENDETTA 4 HOUSE OF FURY		1 TIGER BLADE 2 MURDER 3 SHAGGY DOG 4 V FOR VENDETTA 5 SYRIANA 6 THE DARK	

BACOLOD	034-441-8433 / 034-441-0458	ILOILO	033-338-8570
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A2-4

Gov't offers loans ...

From page A2-1

He said the loan will be released when two-thirds of principal photography is finished.

FDOP is prioritizing "quality, artistic films," Atienza stressed.

To ensure this, the council is eyeing National Artist for Film Eddie Romero to chair the Selection Committee, and CEB chair Christine Dayrit for the Monitoring Committee.

Dayrit said applicants should submit a prospectus, which she defined as "a project proposal that contains all the details—the screenplay, budget, costing and casting."

Atienza and Dayrit said that a similar concept was tried in the Marcos years, with the Experimental Cinema of the Philippines. "It failed because the monitoring and the entire approach were faulty and the funds were soon dissipated," Atienza said.

Should the pilot project work, Atienza said, the FDOP could proceed to tap other sources of funds, like the private sector and institutions.

"We want to prove that financial assistance [to the movie industry] will not be wasted," he said. "We want to show that we can recover and recycle the money and generate more funds."

TV soaps lull ...

From page A2-1

romantic and melodramatic fantasy and escapism, so they exacerbate local TV's general tendency to encourage viewers to run away from reality, instead of confronting it.

At a time when our political and social realities are so fraught with difficulties, this is a disservice that more responsible TV people should reconsider, and desist from performing, don't you think?

And viewers should also resist these shows' escapist blandishments, because they lull us into inaction. Desist and resist—that's it!

Red Carpet 2006

THE NIGHT before we left for a 10-day stay in Turkey, we joined the chic film buffs and diners at the Red Carpet Oscars 2006 event presented by Solar Entertainment at the Mandarin Hotel's Captain's Bar.

Thanks to Wilson Tieng and Charisse Chuidian, we were able to savor, not just a delayed telecast (without commercials) of the Academy Awards, but also some haute fashions and cuisine, plus delectable movie music performed by the Philippine Philharmonic Orchestra.

This was only the second time that the Red Carpet dinner-show was being staged, but it looks like it's well on its way to becoming an annual event.

FRIDAY,
MARCH 24, 2006

ENTERTAINMENT

Are you still hot?

"WE'RE STILL HOT!" The Musical is still running at Teatrino in Greenhills. The play, about women "of a certain age," premiered last week and repeats tonight and tomorrow and again on March 30 and 31, and April 1, 6, 7 and 8. Call 891 9999 or 722-4532.

Tonight
The UP Concert Chorus goes onstage with "Pamamalam!" before embarking on its seven-month "Musikapista-har" world tour "Pamamalam," at the Church of the Risen Lord in JP Dilliman, features gospel, Broadway, folk and pop songs. Repeat tomorrow at the Philamille Auditorium on E Avenue, Manila. Call (0917) 856-8895.

Jazz singer Isha, who was signed by the independent British label Candid Records in 2004, performs with her band, The Look, at the Shangri-la Mall in Mandaluyong, 7 p.m.

Tomorrow
Winston Wings Tour 2006 kicks off with a free street concert on Ma. Orosa and J. Nakpil Streets in Malate, Manila, 7 p.m., featuring Bamboo, Parokya ni Edgar and Sugarfree.

Kuh Ledesma and Bobby Soul of the Platters at the Captain's Bar of the Mandarin Oriental in Makati, 9 p.m. Repeat on April 1. Call 721-6726 or 750-8888.

March 26
Sony BMG artists led by Sharon Cuneta, Gushé, Gyclemind, Pupil and Jimmy Bondoc take center stage on ABS-CBN's "ASAP '06." Christian

Bautista, Sarah Geronimo, Rachel Ann Go sing the music of Eraserheads with select artist-interpreters from the platinum-selling "Ultra-electromagnetic Jam."

SHOW
TIME



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"RIVETING! A GREAT MOVING FILM."
-ANDREW SPOFFORD
"GRIPPING."
-TIM LEE

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SANTANA ROOTS GREGG ROUE LIVE	APR 7 FRU8PM
PAULANKA LIVE IN MANILA	MAY 14 & 15 SUN & MON8PM
KITCHIE NADAL & BARBE ALMALIS ROCKS THE BIG DOME	MAY 19 FRU8PM
THE CASCADES	JUN 16 FRU8PM
ENGELBERT HUMPERDINCK LIVE	JUN 27 TUE8PM

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GLORY ROAD 1:05 / 3:50 / 6:35 / 9:20	NANNY MCPHEE 12:50 / 3:00 / 5:10 / 7:20 / 9:30	ULTRAVIOLET 1:10 / 3:20 / 5:30 / 7:40 / 9:50	ULTRAVIOLET
NORTH COUNTRY 1:20 / 4:00 / 6:40 / 9:20	V FOR VENDETTA 1:40 / 4:20 / 7:00 / 9:40	SHAGGY DOG 12:40 / 2:55 / 5:10	ULTRAVIOLET 2:40 / 4:50 / 7:00 / 9:10
SHE'S THE MAN 1:20 / 4:00 / 6:40 / 9:20	HOSTEL 1:20 / 3:25 / 5:30 / 7:35 / 9:40	DATE MOVIE 7:30 / 9:40 16 BLOCKS 1:55 / 4:30 / 7:05 / 9:40	ONLY PT. 1 BLACK PANTHER PARTY

ALL MALL CINEMAS

V FOR VENDETTA 12:00 / 2:40 / 5:20 / 8:00	ULTRAVIOLET 12:05 / 2:15 / 4:05 / 6:15 / 8:25	NANNY MCPHEE 12:05 / 2:15 / 4:05 / 6:15 / 8:25
HOSTEL 12:15 / 2:20 / 4:25 / 6:30 / 8:35	THE FEARLESS 12:00 / 2:05 / 4:10 / 6:15 / 8:20	DO NOT SUCK

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Ayala Malls

AT THE CINEMAS

G1	1 V FOR VENDETTA	2 ULTRAVIOLET	3 SHE'S THE MAN	4 GLORY ROAD
G4	1 NANNY MCPHEE	2 SHE'S THE MAN	3 ULTRAVIOLET	4 V FOR VENDETTA
GB1	1 ULTRAVIOLET	2 NORTH COUNTRY		
GB3	1 ULTRAVIOLET	2 NORTH COUNTRY		
ATC	1 NORTH COUNTRY	2 NANNY MCPHEE		
ACC	1 CASANOVA	2 LAST HOLIDAY	3 FINAL DESTINATION 3	4 SYRIANA
M2	1 ULTRAVIOLET	2 NORTH COUNTRY		
	3 GLORY ROAD	4 NANNY MCPHEE	5 SHE'S THE MAN	

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GLORIETTA	ALABANG TOWN CENTER
BPI Installment Madness March 15 to 31, 2006	Anson's Emporium Exhibit March 12 to 31, 2006
AYALA CENTER CEBU	MARKET! MARKET!
STI Prep School Graduation Program March 24, 2006	Ka-boosh Summer Fashion Camp March 24, 2006

Ayala Museum Summer Workshop Sampler
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MAGBAYAD NG TAMANG BUWIS
bago ang **April 17** deadline.
24 DAYS TO GO

Gov't hikes sin tax collection target by 18%

BIR to make up for its failure last year to deliver expected revenue

By Michelle V. Remo

THE GOVERNMENT HAS DIRECTED THE BUREAU OF INTERNAL REVENUE to increase its collection of "sin taxes" by 18 percent this year.

The government wants the BIR to make up for its failure last year to deliver the revenue expected from the enactment of the law that raised excise tax rates slapped

on cigarettes and alcohol products.

The BIR this year is given a tax collection target of P48.042 billion from P40.695 billion last year.

The revenue agency was supposed to have collected about P5 billion more in sin taxes, based on its projected incremental revenues from the Sin Tax law.

The government said the sin tax law

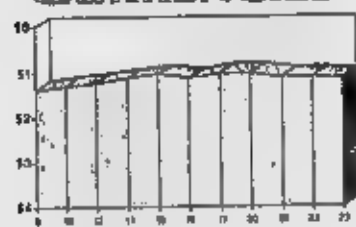
was supposed to generate P7.5 billion in additional taxes last year. But the BIR was able to collect only about P2 billion.

The law was enacted in December 2004 and took effect in January last year.

Revenue officials claimed that the BIR's failure last year to meet the projected P7.5 billion in incremental revenue

GOV'T/B3

INDICATORS CURRENCIES



P 51.16 = \$

As of 5 p.m., March 23, 2006

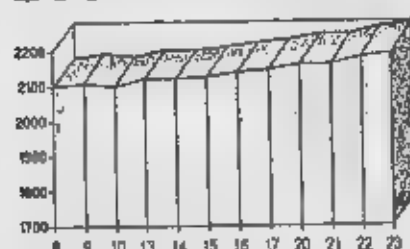
Y 116.90 = \$

As of 5 p.m., March 23, 2006

GOLD, \$549.30-\$549.80

per ounce Hong Kong, March 23, 2006

STOCK MARKET



(See stock market report on Page B2)

Shares close 0.37% higher

SHARE PRICES YESTERDAY CLOSED 0.37 percent higher, extending gains as fund managers polished their portfolios ahead of the end of the first quarter of the year, dealers said.

Recent positive economic data and earnings
SHARES/B2

WHAT'S INSIDE

Winston ups
Equitable ante /B3

DBP increasing funds
for wholesale lending /B7

BOP surplus of P1.6B seen by yearend

By Doris C. Dumlaog

THE BANGKO SENTRAL NG PILIPINAS EXPECTS its balance of payments to post a surplus of about \$1.6 billion by year's end, lower than last year's \$2.4 billion.

Although the country's actual BOP surplus in the first two months of this year had already reached \$2.03 billion, BSP has "conservatively" factored in outflows from debt payments for the rest of the year, as well as lower growth in inflows of overseas Filipino workers' remittances and foreign portfolio investments.

But even as local exporters are complaining that the sharply rising peso was hurting their business, the BSP maintained its more optimistic outlook on export, expecting a growth rate of 8 percent this year against last year's 4 percent.

But BSP Deputy Governor Diwa Guingundo said the latest projections already assumed a stronger peso against the US dollar. The government's latest foreign exchange assumption is a range of 51 to 53 for the year.

"There are still many risks in the global economy, such as in exports," Guingundo said. "We are price takers in the world market, we must be more realistic about it."

He added that the BSP was looking at a lower OFW remittances growth rate of 10 percent from last year's growth of 25 percent due to certain risks, such as the strict implementation of anti-money laundering measures and immigration policies around the world.

"We expect strong OFW remittance to continue, but not in the same magnitude as [last year's] 25 percent," Guingundo said.

BSP officials added, however, that all these projections on the BOP and its components could still change, depending on external developments this year.

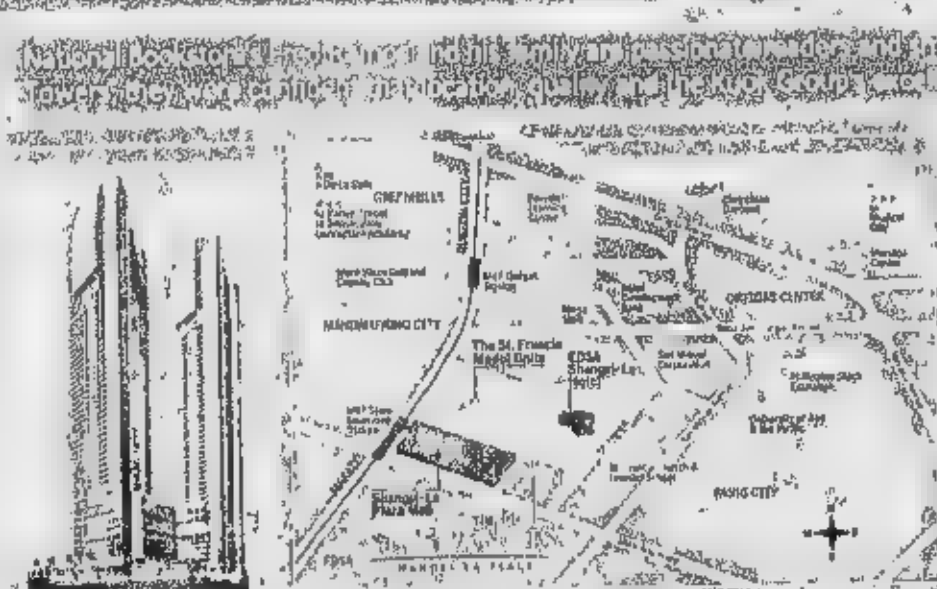
In the case of inflows of hot money or foreign portfolio investments in stocks and peso-denominated government securities, Guingundo said that there has been slower inflows this year compared to those recorded last year.

She added that the government's front-loading of foreign borrowings expanded the

BOP SURPLUS/B7



Fred and Presy Ramos, business owners, with their children Maureen and Adrian.



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Empire East to buy back shares

Real estate developer sets aside P2 billion for 2-yr program

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

REAL ESTATE DEVELOPER EMPIRE EAST Land Holdings, Inc. will buy back up to P1 billion worth of its own shares over the next two years, the company said in a disclosure yesterday.

Empire East said the buyback program was part of its strategy to "create and enhance share-

holder value" as current market prices of Empire East's shares "do not reflect their true value."

Empire East shares yesterday closed at 57 centavos each.

Empire East will carry out the buy-back program over the next two years.

Empire East is a pioneer in self-contained township projects in Metro Manila and in the suburbs, catering to the middle-income market.

These include flagship project Laguna Bel-Air in Sta. Rosa, Laguna; Cambridge Village in the Pasig-Cainta area; and California Garden Square in Mandaluyong City.

Meanwhile, trading of the shares of Empire East's parent firm Megaworld Corp. will be suspended from April 7 to 21 to pave the way for its international stock offer.

Splash sees sales growth

SPLASH CORP., THE flagship beauty and skin care products arm of Splash Holdings, expects to grow its revenues to between P4 billion and P4.6 billion this year with its introduction of new products.

Splash was able to generate P3.7 billion in revenues last year owing to five new brands under its cosmetics and toiletries line, Noel Manucom, associate vice president for Splash said in a press briefing yesterday.

Manucom, however, declined to disclose its new product offerings this year.

Net income, on the other hand, for the year was placed at P450 million from P200 million last year.

Splash is considered a market leader in the sale of lotions, exfoliants, whitening products and lotions.

To bankroll further expansion, Splash plans to raise P3 billion from a proposed public offering of new or previously-owned shares by the first quarter next year.

It has tapped Ernst and Young as financial adviser.

Shares ...

From page B1

reports also continued to bolster the market, which has risen over six of the past seven sessions, the dealers added.

The Philippine Stock Exchange composite index rose 8.08 points to 2,192.78 for the best finish since Aug. 30, 1999 when it ended at 2,201.24.

Earlier, the index moved between 2,184.13 and 2,198.01.

The all-shares index was down 1.92 points at 1,054.13.

Volume stood at 1.01 billion shares worth P1.3 billion (\$42.87 million). Gamers outnumbered losers 75 to 21, while 48 stocks were unchanged.

The peso traded at 51.155 to the US dollar as of mid-day.

Ayala Corp., the country's largest conglomerate, was the benchmark index's main mover, ending up P7.50 at P360.

Its units, Bank of the Philippine Islands and Ayala Land Inc., however succumbed to profit-taking, with top-traded BPI falling 50 centavos to P62.50, while Ayala Land was down 25 centavos at P10.75.

San Miguel Corp. A shares, limited to local investors, ended unchanged at P60.50, but San Miguel B-shares open to both local and foreign investors, gained 50 centavos to P81.50. AFP

Philippine Stock Exchange

(As of March 23, 2006)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
FINANCIAL					
Bank of the Philippine Islands	35.5	36	35.5	36	278,200
Bank of the Philippine Islands	63	63.5	62.5	62.5	2,815,400
Chiyasu Savings Bank	20	20	20	20	1,000
Equitable PC Bank Inc.	0.39	0.41	0.38	0.41	15,950,000
International Exchange Bank	77.5	79.5	76	79.5	758,400
Malayan Banking Ltd.	28	28.5	28	28	726,800
Philippine National Bank	33	33.5	32.5	33	50,700
PNB Savings Bank	35	35	35	35	30,000
Rural Bank of Cebu	13	13.25	13	13.25	88,000
Security Bank Corp.	39	41	39	41	437,900
Union Bank of the Phil.	35	40	36.5	37	16,200
OTHER FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS					
0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8	50.0	
24	24.5	24	24.5	1.0	
32.10	32.0	32.10	32.10	1.0	
150	150	150	150	1.0	
21.30	21.35	21.30	21.35	5.0	
0.83	0.84	0.83	0.84	930,000	
INDUSTRIAL					
ELECTRICITY, ENERGY, POWER & WATER					
First Gen Corp.	41.5	42.5	41.5	42	1,893,400
First Gen Holdings Corp.	42.5	45.5	42.5	45	2,014,300
Manila Electric Co. A	13	13.5	13	13.5	8,100
Manila Electric Co. B	20.25	20.5	20.25	20.5	188,600
Manila Water Co. Inc.	6.5	6.5	6.4	6.4	949,000
Petrone Corp.	4.55	4.65	4.55	4.6	5,489,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	0.9	0.91	0.91	0.91	150,000
FOOD, BEVERAGE & TOBACCO					
Capri Group Corp.	3.6	3.6	3.6	3.6	18,000
0.17	0.17	0.17	0.17	3,000	
18	19.25	19	19.25	19	50,000
38	38.5	38	38	496,000	
3.7	3.7	3.7	3.7	5,000	
Ronzon Holdings Inc.	2.16	2.42	2.16	2.38	3,317,000
San Miguel Corp. A	60	60.5	60	60.5	29,500
San Miguel Corp. B	81.5	81.5	81	81.5	349,700
Universal Robina Corp.	18	18.25	18	18.25	173,200
0.29	0.29	0.29	0.29	580,600	
CONSTRUCTION, INFRASTRUCTURE & ALLIED SERVICES					
0.3	0.31	0.29	0.31	9,740,000	
1.46	1.52	1.46	1.48	12,642,000	
4.2	4.25	4.15	4.2	1,558,000	
DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIALS					
0.07	0.07	0.07	0.07	2,000,000	
7.4	7.5	7.4	7.5	246,000	
0.57	0.57	0.57	0.57	9,140,000	
HOLDING FIRMS					
0.007	0.0075	0.007	0.0075	7,000,000	
0.0085	0.0085	0.0085	0.0085	2,000,000	
352.5	360	352.5	360	140	
0.52	0.52	0.52	0.52	1,000,000	
11.5	11.5	11.5	11.5	2,400,000	
0.024	0.024	0.024	0.024	18,400,000	
2.44	2.44	2.44	2.44	305,000	
0.21	0.235	0.21	0.22	4,600,000	
0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	5,600,000	
0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8	480,000	
0.98	1.04	0.98	1.02	13,720,000	
2.95	2.95	2.95	2.95	1,040,000	
2.9	3.15	2.9	3	3,074,000	
1.34	1.34	1.34	1.34	823,000	
0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	1,591,000	
0.012	0.012	0.012	0.012	12,000,000	
0.27	0.27	0.26	0.26	2,080,000	
0.92	0.92	0.89	0.89	190,000	
0.53	0.54	0.53	0.54	380,000	
0.14	0.145	0.14	0.14	14,100,000	
2.27	2.33	2.26	2.3	520,840	
0.5	0.53	0.5	0.53	470,000	
0.12	0.125	0.12	0.125	2,450,000	
PROPERTY					
1.1	1.1	1.05	1.05	3,852,500	
0.94	0.94	0.94	0.94	22,233,000	
0.25	0.28	0.25	0.26	10,770,000	
1.92	1.96	1.9	1.9	3,296,000	
1.64	1.7	1.64	1.68	55,000	
1.08	1.12	1.08	1.12	1,000,000	
0.21	0.21	0.21	0.21	2,800,000	
0.53	0.58	0.52	0.57	58,130,000	
0.74	0.76	0.74	0.77	1,900,000	
0.029	0.031	0.029	0.031	7,300,000	
0.71	0.71	0.71	0.71	1,000,000	
1.28	1.28	1.28	1.28	28,500,000	
0.08	0.08	0.08	0.08	200,000	
3.05	3.5	3.05	3.4	2,480,000	
0.0044	0.0044	0.0044	0.0044	30,000,000	
0.0045	0.0048	0.0045	0.0048	53,000,000	
0.225	0.225	0.225	0.225	780,000	
0.52	0.56	0.52	0.55	3,160,000	
0.016	0.016	0.016	0.016	500,000	
1.48	1.48	1.48	1.48	5,880,000	
0.33	0.34	0.33	0.34	2,440,000	
0.31	0.31	0.31	0.31	13,420,000	
0.185	0.17	0.185	0.17	20,000	
7.6	7.8	7.6	7.8	1,250,000	
0.33	0.33	0.31	0.31	12,210,000	
1.44	1.5	1.44	1.5	580,000	
0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	5,000,000	
0.15	0.155	0.15	0.15	23,310,000	
SERVICE MEDIA					
12.5	12.5	12.5	12.5	4,100	
1.34	1.34	1.34	1.34	24,000	
0.92	0.98	0.92	0.97	11,050,000	
900	900	890	890	38,370	
3	3	2.9	2.95	5,600,000	
1875	1890	1865	1870	27,850	
TELECOMMUNICATIONS					
0.2	0.2	0.195	0.2	3,310,000	
0.013	0.013	0.013	0.013	7,000,000	
0.05	0.0525	0.05	0.0525	1,100,000	
1.14	1.14	1.12	1.12	10,000,000	
0.022	0.023	0.022	0.023	15,900,000	
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
1.96	1.96	1.92	1.92	210,000	
1.66	1.66	1.65	1.66	1,000	
11.25	11.25	10.75	11	78,000	
0.97	0.97	0.97	0.97	20,000	
3.8	3.9	3.8	3.8	20,000	
HOTEL & LEISURE					
3.5	3.5	3.5	3.5	840,000	
1.86	1.86	1.84	1.86	2,400,000	
0.41	0.41	0.41	0.41	250,000	
EDUCATION					
650	650	650	650	500	
3.2	3.2	3.2	3.2	100,000	
DIVERSIFIED SERVICES					
1.6	1.6	1.55	1.58	32,000	
8.75	9.1	8.8	8.9	2,144,000	
0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8	40,000	
WARRANTS, PHIL. DEPOSIT RECEIPTS, ETC.					
12.75	12.75	12.5	12.75	158,900	

CURRENCIES

Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Equivalent
March 23, 2006				
Dollar	0.828020	1.000000	51.1530	
Yen	0.007081	0.008552	0.4375	
United Kingdom	1.447048	1.747600	89.4125	
Hong Kong	0.106701	0.128863	6.5930	
France	0.634304	0.766049	39.1934	
Canada	0.718076	0.857559	43.8753	
Singapore	0.512294	0.618697	31.6544	
Dollar	0.596258	0.720098	36.8424	
Dinar	2.197156	2.653505	135.7613	
Rial	0.220782	0.266638	13.6420	
Rupiah	0.510714	0.616789	31.5568	
Baht	0.000091	0.000110	0.0056	
Dirham	0.021264	0.025851	1.3139	
UAE	0.225465	0.272294	13.9314	
Euro	1.000000	1.207700	61.7806	
Brazil	0.269494	0.325468	16.6519	
Peso	0.383343	0.462693	23.6866	
Kroner	0.134001	0.161833	8.2709	
India	0.018586	0.022543	1.1534	
Malaysia	0.224396	0.271003	13.8653	
Mexico	0.076154	0.091971	4.7055	
Dollar	0.628101	0.762101	32.1355	
Norway	0.125825	0.151960	7.7747	
Rupiah	0.013801	0.016567	0.8527	
South Africa	0.138005	0.157973	8.0824	
Korea	0.000851	0.001028	0.0528	
Sweden	0.106969	0.129186	6.6095	
Syria	0.015851	0.019264	0.9856	
Yen	0.025469	0.030759	1.5737	
Venezuela	0.000488	0.000488	0.0238	

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Winston ups Equitable ante

STUNG BY ACCUSATIONS that he was merely hyping the market, an annoyed Winston Garcia said yesterday that he had sent out a buy order for up to 10 million shares of Equitable PCIBank to 15 accredited GSIS brokers.

At the same time, the GSIS president said that he had informed Nestor Tan, president of Banco de Oro, that the Government Service Insurance System was also willing to buy out the BDO/SM Group's stake in Equitable PCIBank, "cash, no questions asked," at yesterday's closing price of P79.50.

(Disclosure: Cocktales does not, and has never owned, whether directly or indirectly, any Equitable PCIBank share.)

Trading in Equitable PCIBank was considerably higher yesterday, with 758,400 shares changing hands, compared to Wednesday's 276,600. Tuesday's 138,800 and Monday's 206,900, when the shares closed at P75 apiece.

The 10-million-share buy order that Garcia said he had issued represents about 1.375 percent of the bank's 727,003,345 total outstanding shares—hardly enough to dent the existing power structure in Equitable PCIBank. "They sniff down that I have a 'drunken' buyer," a piqued Garcia said. "After the smoke of this battle clears, let's see who had been drunk and who had been sleeping on the job."

Economists at the gate

THE UP School of Economics was in full force at the Bangko Sentral Wednesday, but instead of protesting the strong peso, the disma. scientists even expressed irrational exuberance over an institution they had been fulminating against not too long ago.

"There is no finer investment for any community than putting milk into the mouth of babies," said UPSE Dean Rau Fabella in his studied British accent, quoting Churchill, as he accepted a P3-million check from Gov. Armandito Tandang Jr. The modest outing established the BSP Professorial Sterling Chair in Monetary

COCKTALES



Victor C. Agustin

and Banking Economics in the Diliman school, alma mater to the three current deputy governors—Nestor Espenilla, Diwa Gunigundo and Armando Suratos.

According to the grapevine, Fabella proposed the professional endowment, something he acknowledged was not possible in the past due to what he said was "the suspicion of motives."

The past he referred to was 11 years ago, when Fabella and colleagues, funded by grants from the US Agency for International Development, waged an advocacy campaign against the Bangko Sentral to press for peso devaluation and record dollar inflows.

Disclosure: Cocktales at that time was receiving flak from the Bangko Sentral, battling with admitted gusto against his more learned adversaries.

This time, the Diliman guests were more circumspect. Fabella avoided reporters who were itching to get his views on the current strong peso, also amid record dollar inflows.

Likewise, UP vice president Amelia Guevarra, UPSE department chair Ma Socorro Gochoco-Bautista, and three former economic planning secretaries currently on the UP faculty—Solita Monsod, Gerardo Siat and Dante Canlas—took the same tack, preferring to dissect the grilled fillet of cream dory amid live piano music rather than dwell on current monetary policies.

Clearly, it was not the time to use another Churchillian quote: "I have never developed indigestion from eating my words."

Money-go-round

• THE Far Eastern University next month will confer an honorary doctorate for Business Management on retired Bangko Sentral Gov. Rafael Buenaventura. • FORMER Fi-

nance Secretary Roberto de Ocampo denies attending the March 7 Phinma penthouse meeting between pro-GMA alumni and anti-GMA La Salle president Bro. Armin Luistro, as well as subsequently hosting a ballroom dancing session for the group.

A La Salle informant, however, claims that the ballroom dancing, plus karaoke, session was indeed held in De Ocampo's Greenhills house two days later.

Heard through the grapevine

THE Ayalas are finalizing details for their Manila Water to take over the operations of the Fort water and sewerage company, which, it is hoped, would bring water rates within The Fort down to Makati-Taguig levels.

(Email: cocktales_pdi@pldtsi.net or cocktales_pdi@yahoo.com)

PRULINK	PRU LIFE UK	
Investments of Variable Life Insurance Contracts	Current Week Mar. 21, 2006	Last Week Mar. 14, 2006
Bond Fund - Peso	1.42399	1.40476
Managed Fund - Peso	1.54596	1.52105
Growth Fund - Peso	1.17891	1.15094
Bond Fund - US Dollar	1.2471	1.2389

Note: These investments of variable life insurance contracts are not subject to the Life Insurance products are regulated by the Insurance Commission.

Investment Funds of		UNIT PRICES (in Php)	
Health Builder	Wealth Secure	March 20, 2006	March 13, 2006
Fixed Income Fund		1.143952	1.134202
Balanced Fund		1.131318	1.118447
Equity Fund		1.103936	1.083727

These investment funds are specific to variable life insurance contracts and are not considered mutual funds. Life insurance products are regulated by the Insurance Commission. The weekly unit prices are also available at www.philamlife.com.ph.

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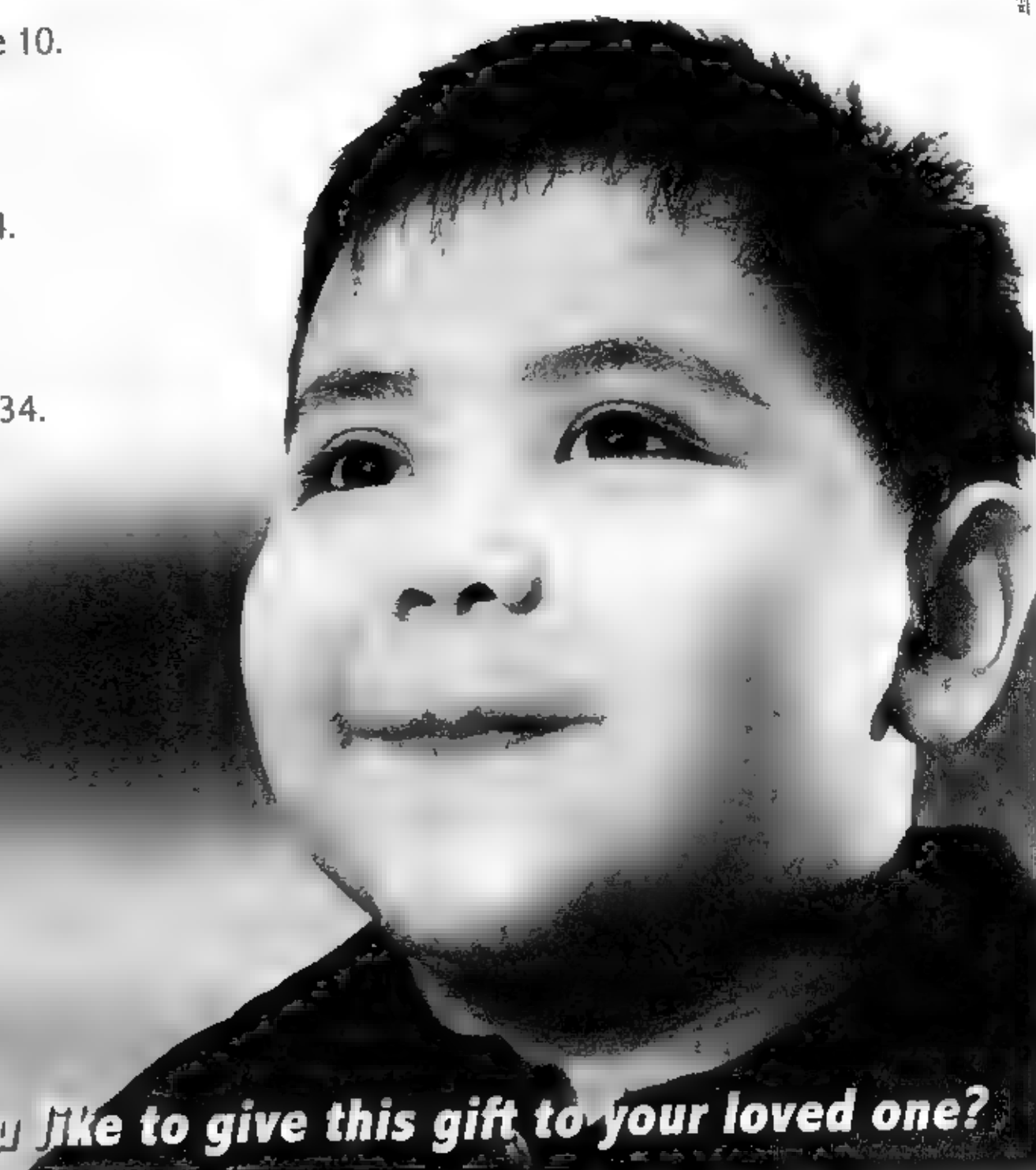
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* Illustration for an insured age 5 with a P500,000 basic face amount, inclusive of dividends. Dividends are dependent on the company's performance and are not guaranteed.

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Gov't hikes ...

From page B1

venues from the Sin Tax law was due to the frontloading of production done by cigarette and alcohol manufacturers.

Knowing that sin taxes would increase starting January last year, some cigarette and alcohol makers advanced production in the latter months of 2004 to avoid paying higher taxes, BIR officials had said.

Excise tax is slapped on products once they are released from factories.

The BIR said it had implemented administrative measures to improve the collection of sin taxes and plug possible tax leaks.

One such measure calls for the installation of a computer system in factories of alcoholic beverages and cigarettes. The system will detect the volume of products taken out of the factories.

The BIR has already installed a computerized detection system in the factory of cigarette maker Fortune Tobacco, owned by tycoon Lakso Lim.

The Sin Tax law is one of the revenue-raising measures the Arroyo administration is pushing in an effort to reduce the government's huge budget deficit, which last year stood at P46.5 billion.

The government's economic team hopes to wipe out the deficit by 2008.



SPICING UP SBMA

Dencio's recently opened its Subic branch. Seen at the opening were (from left) SBMA Chair Feliciano Saronga, Dencio's managing director Judy Gabriel, SBMA Board Director JV Magsaysay, and Olongapo City Vice Mayor Rolan Paulino. Dencio's, 'an all new attitude of an old time great', has other branches in Scout Albano, Capitol Hills,

Camp John Hay, Rockwell, Jupiter, Carlubang, Metrowalk, Las Pinas, SM Baguio, Eastwood, Paseo de Roxas, Brittany Bay, Robinsons Ermita, CCP Complex, SM Magamall, Araneta Center, Paseo de Magallanes, Banawe, and Luisita Center. Watch out for branches soon to open in the Fort and Connecticut in Greenhills.

Product FILES

A LOW COST, HIGH-VOLUME, compact, high-tech Ozonated Ultra-Violet Water Station is what you need to be cost efficient and profitable in the water refilling business. The obsolete way, the reverse osmosis system, is expensive and throws away (using backwash) seven out of 10 gallons of water. This makes the RO system environmentally unfriendly and unprofitable. Ozonation (Ozone or O3) radical gas, on the other hand, kills germs on contact 300 times better and safer than chlorine.

The Electromex UHP500 is ultra compact at 4 feet x 3 feet x 6 feet, in-

clusive of the tanks and the US-made filters and European-made stainless pump head complete with the high-energy Ultra Violet Germicidal lamp and heavy-duty Ozone Generator. This machine delivers five gallons a minute (3,000 gallons in half a day). Electromex doesn't need royalties or prohibitive franchise fees because the machine is portable.

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OBITUARIES

CABOCHAN FAMILY

MOURNS WITH DEEP SORROW THE
UNTIMELY DEATH, AT THE AGE OF 81,
OF THEIR BELOVED

**RICARDO PAULINO
CABOCHAN**

OF
SAN MIGUEL, BULACAN

His remains lie in state at
Mount Carmel Church,
New Manila, Quezon City.
His cremation will be held at
Loyola Marikina
on Sunday, March 26, 2006 after
the 2:30 p.m. Mass at
Mount Carmel Church

**LOURDES MEDRANO
VASQUEZ**

of Nasugbu, Batangas and
Ayala Alabang Village, Muntinlupa

Died on March 19, 2006 at the age of 61

Her husband Godofredo Vasquez; children Geovy Vasquez
and Ivy Vasquez-Javier; children-in-law
Yhang Errasquin-Vasquez and Jonathan Javier
and grandchildren Gianacey and Joshua
request their friends to join them in prayers.

Her remains lie in state at F. Castro Street,
Nasugbu, Batangas. Interment will be on Sunday,
March 26, 2006 after the 1 p.m. Mass at
St. Francis Xavier Church, Nasugbu, Batangas.

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JOSE DEMETILLO MASANGKAY, SR.
(February 21, 1922 - March 20, 2006)

Peacefully joined his CREATOR and wife LUZ YATGO MASANGKAY. He lived a full life and was a devoted selfless father. He is survived by his children, MARIBEL MASANGKAY VANN, ARLENE Y. MASANGKAY MARISSA Y. MASANGKAY, SOCORRO MASANGKAY LOCK, JOSE MASANGKAY, JR., grandchildren: CREECHIE LOCK, GREENIE LOCK, MARC-ANTOINE VOULLAUME, JOSE CARLO MASANGKAY MA, CRISTINE MASANGKAY CHOLO MASANGKAY JOSE MARIE MASANGKAY, and nephew RICARDO Q. YATGO.

His body lies in state at San Antonio de Padua Church, Binen, Leguna. Interment will be on March 26, 2006 after the 1:30 Mass at Centennial Chapel, Centennial, Sta. Rosa City, Leguna.

Alindogan is new DBP Chair

PRESIDENT GLORIA MACAPAGAL-Arroyo has appointed former Monetary Board member Antonio L. Alindogan, Jr. as the new chair of the Development Bank of the Philippines (DBP). He replaces former chair Vitaliano N. Nalagas II who resigned from the bank to return to the private sector.

Prior to his appointment, Alindogan was the Bank's consultant for microfinance, responsible for the establishment of an integrated approach to a more effective and sustainable microfinance operations in the Bank.

In his six-year term of office as Monetary Board member from August 1999 to July 2005, Alindogan

volunteered to be the lead advocate of microfinance. He visited various microfinance institutions, banks, and NGOs. He attended meetings of microenterprises in their barangays, listened to them, encouraged them, and pushed for policy changes to bring microfinance in the forefront of development.

Alindogan is a magna cum laude graduate of the De La Salle University where he completed a course in business. He is a certified public accountant, and attended the 82nd Advanced Management Program of the Harvard Business School in 1979. He also trained extensively with J.P. Morgan's banking offices in New York, Zurich, London, and Singapore.

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FELINO ISIDRO DE LEON
of Peñaranda, Nueva Ecija

Peacefully joined his Creator on March 22, 2006 at the age of 83.

His loving wife SIMPLICIA ABESAMIS, children NIMFA, NOMER, NORMA, NELIA & NESTOR grandchildren MANILYN, MARINEL, LIXON, REXEL, BORGY & ANNE and brothers / sisters in laws request to pray for his eternal happiness in heaven.

His remains lie in state at the family residence in Peñaranda, Nueva Ecija.

Interment will be held at 2:00 p.m. Sunday, 26 March 2006 at Peñaranda Cemetery.

FRIDAY, MARCH 24, 2006

Switch to energy-saving lamps will save RP P24B/year, Philips says

By Abigail L. Ho

THE COUNTRY WILL SAVE AS much as P24 billion a year and cut electricity consumption by at least 2.58 million megawatt-hours (MWh) if incandescent bulbs and fluorescent lights are replaced with more energy-efficient lighting systems.

Paul Peeters, Philips Lighting general manager for the

Asean/Pacific region, said in a briefing yesterday that replacing some 25 million installed incandescent bulbs in the country with compact fluorescent lamps (CFLs) would result in P19 billion in monetary savings and 2 million MWh in electricity savings a year.

Replacing all old-style "T12" fluorescent bulbs with the new-technology "T8" bulbs, on the other hand, would chalk up year-

ly savings of P5 billion and reduce overall electricity consumption by 580,000 MWh, he said.

Bulbs using T8 technology, he explained, were thinner and use less energy than their T12 counterparts.

He said households and commercial and industrial establishments in other parts of the world have been switching to T8 fluorescent bulbs.

"Apart from the Philippines, only Pakistan and India are using T12. The rest of the world is now using T8," he said.

These countries have been slow to switch to T12 fluorescent bulbs because of the huge difference in cost.

Incandescent bulbs sell for P26 each compared to an average of P120 each for energy-saving lamps.

Peter said people would have to realize the long-term benefits for them to trade in their incandescent bulbs for energy-saving bulbs.

"Switching is an investment that consumers will have to make," he said.

Citing Philips research, he said that if a million homes were to replace just one standard 60-watt incandescent bulb with an

11-watt energy-saver CFL, the country's overall electricity demand would drop by 38 megawatts (MW).

On the industrial side, if just 500 big industries swapped their current standard magnetic ballast-type fluorescent lamps with the new generation of energy-saving fluorescent bulbs, peak demand would be reduced by 16 MW.

Japanese outlook worsens in March

By Ronnel W. Domingo

JAPANESE FIRMS' BUSINESS SENTIMENT on the country has taken a turn for the worse.

The monthly survey by the Japan External Trade Organization showed that the firms' rating on the Philippines dropped further to a negative 10.1 in March from a negative 0.4 last month—the lowest in 11 months—due partly to a decline in overall confidence in Southeast Asia.

The report said, however, that business sentiment was expected to improve in the next two or three months to a rating of negative 2.9.

Jetro said this was in line with the expected improvement in the overall sentiment for the original members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations—including Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia and Singapore—in the coming months.

The poll also showed that 47.5 percent of Asean respondents cited the "negative impacts" of high petroleum prices on their busi-

Jetro conducts the survey to provide up-to-date information on business conditions in the Asian economy to help companies develop more effective business strategies.

Jetro polls the companies to measure year-

on-year changes in their business outlook for the current month and the next two or three months.

The answers are expressed as DI, the difference between the ratio of positive and negative responses.

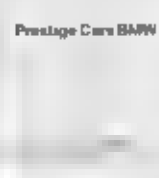

A bigger DI means that there are more companies with a negative outlook on their businesses in the country.

Firms were asked to compare earnings prospects, supply and demand, inventory, sales prices and accounts receivable with the same period a year earlier.


When Jetro started the monthly poll in June 2001, the Philippines rated negative in first 10 months with the DI rating bottoming at negative 40.9 in December 2001 and peaking at 22.9 in September 2004.

In the past 12 months, the Philippines posted a high DI rating of 1.6 in April 2005 and hit the lowest so far this month.

Philippine-based respondents in the August survey included 209 firms engaged in businesses involving oil, chemicals, steel, metals, electric and electronic machinery, transportation machinery and other manufacturing concerns as well as construction, real estate, transport, communication, commerce, services and other nonmanufacturing activities.

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Empire ...

From page B2

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The secondary shares to be sold are owned by Colony-CB Richard Ellis, Megaworld's foreign partner. Megaworld hopes to raise P5 billion from the offer.

Industry analysts put the offer price at about P1.40 a share.

Megaworld closed at P1.48 a share yesterday.

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Makati City, Metro Manila

NOTICE OF ANNUAL MEETING OF STOCKHOLDERS
April 6, 2006

To The Stockholders:

Pursuant to Article IV of the Amended By-Laws of the Bank of the Philippine Islands (BPI), notice is hereby given that the Annual Meeting of the Stockholders of BPI will be held at the Grand Ballroom, Hotel Inter-Continental, Makati City, Metro Manila, on Thursday, 06 April 2006, at 9:00 A.M., for the transaction of the following business:

1. Calling of Meeting to Order
2. Certification of Notice
3. Determination and Declaration of Quorum
4. Approval of the Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Stockholders on April 7, 2005 and the Special Meeting on November 11, 2005.
5. Reading of Annual Report and approval of the Bank's Statement of Condition as of December 31, 2005 incorporated in the Annual Report.
6. Approval and Confirmation of all Acts during the past year of the Board of Directors, Executive Committee, and all other Board and Management Committees and Officers of BPI.
7. Election of 15 Members of the Board of Directors.
8. Election of External Auditors and Fixing their Remuneration.
9. Declaration of Stock Dividend.
10. Directors' Bonus.
11. Other Matters.

In accordance with Article XII of the said By-Laws, the Stock and Transfer Book of BPI will be closed from March 7, 2006 to April 6, 2006. Only Stockholders of record as of March 7, 2006 will be entitled to notice and to vote at the said meeting.

If it will be inconvenient for you to attend the meeting, you may at your option, appoint another person to represent you thereat by means of a proxy, which should be submitted to the Office of the Corporate Secretary of BPI, 19th Floor, BPI Building, Ayala Avenue corner Paseo de Roxas, Makati City, Metro Manila, not later than 5:00 P.M. of March 27, 2006. Validation of proxies shall be held at the same office on March 29, 2006 at 4:00 P.M.

When signing as attorney-in-fact, executor, administrator, guardian, or in any other representative capacity, please give full title and file papers showing your authority

FOR THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS
(Sgd.) **CARLOS B. AQUINO**
Vice President & Corporate Secretary

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March 28 For RETAIL / WHOLESALE and SALES-ORIENTED BUSINESSES

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March 31 For PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

For reservations, please fax this to 759-2022 or 24 or email details to editors@pcmag.ph

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Nature of Business: _____

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- CENU CITY**
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May 11, 2006 • 8:30am to 5:00pm
- ANGELES, PAMPANGA**
Holiday Inn Clark
June 8, 2006 • 8:30am to 5:00pm

Seminar fee is just PhP500.00. Inclusive of: Buffet lunch, morning & afternoon snacks, and a 6-month subscription to PC Magazine.

Selected participants shall be contacted prior to the event and shall be given instructions on how to forward payments. Once payment is received, the selected participants shall be given CONFIRMATION CODES. Only interested parties with confirmation codes shall be accepted into the seminars.

Due to limited slots, PC Magazine reserves the right to pre-select the participants for the above seminars.

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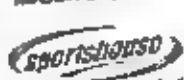
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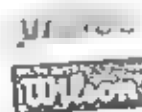
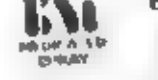
APRIL 22-23, 2006

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Investing in women farmers

By Ernesto M. Ordoñez

AS THE WOMEN'S MONTH ENDS, WE MUST realize that the economic empowerment of women farmers is key to our country's development. They constitute half of the largest sector in the economy and are largely responsible for putting food on our table. However, women farmers not only belong to the poorest sector; they are further disadvantaged because of the bias given to their male counterparts in development opportunities. This is ironic, because several studies have shown that spending on women farmers often produces the highest return on investment.

COMMENTARY

Facts and figures

In her article, "Protecting the Rights of Women Farmers," Nepal's Kamala Sarup states: "According to FAO estimates, women produce more than 50 percent of the food grown worldwide. This includes up to 80 percent of food produced by women in African countries, 60 percent in Asia, and between 30 and 40 percent in South America. But still, women are getting poorer. The percentage of women below the poverty line has increased by 50 percent since the 1970s, while the comparable figure for men increased by only 30 percent."

A recent World Bank study showed that if women received the same education as men, farm yields could rise by as much as 22 percent. However, women farmers have access to only 5 percent of agricultural extension services worldwide.

Mane Randriamamonjy, FAO's Women in Development Service chief, states: "Because of this gender bias, policy-makers have very little data or analytical tools to measure the true social and economic value of women's farm labor. As a result, rural women are ignored when national agricultural policies are designed."

Philippine situation

Teresita Oliveros of the National Federation of Peasant Women and Asian Peasant Women Network, writes: "Of the 11.2 million total labor force in agriculture, 8.5 million are landless. This is based on government data which counts men primarily as farmers and, therefore, part of the labor force. However, the number of landless peasant women approximates that of their male counterparts. This is based on the total rural female population 15 years old and above, with a total number of 8 million."

Oliveros adds: "Since much of the prime arable land is planted with export/commercial crops that benefit landlords, bureaucrats and capitalists, women are forced to till far-

flung rocky uplands needed for the family's survival. Prevailing patriarchal land ownership incapacitates women's access to credit and training that can result in an increase in productivity. Due to sexual division of labor, women are also burdened with housework."

Women power

Reversing the sad state of women farmers and harnessing their largely untapped potential requires investing in women power. In October 2003, the Philippine Peasant Institute (now called Centro Saka) spearheaded the First National Rural Women's Congress. This was aimed at empowering rural women to secure their equitable share of opportunities.

Two and a half years later, the rural women have achieved much. They are now organized as the Pambansang Koalisyon ng Kababaihan sa Kanayunan or Rural Women's Coalition, aligned with the Alyansa Agrikultura. They are in 52 provinces, with 159 people organizations and 69 nongovernment organizations.

Last year, consultations were held in 30 provinces. For many of these provinces, it was the first time rural women emerged as a force. Rural women are now adequately represented in the regional Gender and Development (GAD) councils. They are also identified in many GAD plans with specific budgets allocated for them. Before this, rural women were practically invisible.

In the priority area of training, PKK's secretary general Daryl Leyesa states, "As a national coalition, we are asking that the bias for training men in agriculture be stopped and women given their equitable share. In addition, because practically all the government training programs are given to government-initiated farmer organizations, we ask that these training programs also be given to organizations initiated by rural women."

Numbers count

Over the years, the Department of Agriculture has improved its services to rural women. There are still areas of improvement.

Decisions for investments on women farmers are largely influenced by the DA regional executive directors. However, today, only one out of the 14 REDs is a woman. Jindra Dementio of Region 6. It is, therefore, recommended that there be a time-specific program to increase the number of women in the DA senior management, especially in the regions. In the meantime, it is hoped that priority attention be given to investments in rural women.

(For inquiries and suggestions, email agri-watchphil@yahoo.com or telefax 02-8516635.)

Dette L. Nacario: a woman leader in computer industry

ICT industry is a man's world. Think again. It may be an Adam-dominated society but in this modern-day era where impossible is considered a myth, and the backward state of living was transformed into an advancement of human stature, women have risen from their immemorial slumber projecting everyone their auspicious depot of wisdom.

Therefore this Women's month, a notable exemplar of contemporary lady is worth halting for the breakthroughs she had accomplished in the computer industry. She may be surrounded with tons of technical specification and out-of-this-world jargons, but user for HP.

ogy to the world. Nacario regarded women leaders as the main key in promoting computer literacy in the country. She explained that women having their own unique way of influencing people such traits can be used to change the perspective of people on technology.

Nacario added that women are the one calling the shot when it comes to shopping and purchases especially of consumer products, thus it will play an important role in the future products that will be introduced in the market.

"It is expected that women leaders can also dominate the IT industry. Philippines has always been known to have a number of 'literate industries/businesses,'" she said.

and groom more capable managers and leaders for HP.

What makes her truly proud of working for HP is the fact that it is a company that strongly promotes a high performance environment without compromising integrity and respect for individuals, takes care of its employees including individual growth and a company that has a soul.

"HP is one of the best companies to work for. All employees are made aware of the 'HP way' where it talks about our culture and our standards of business conduct which you can apply not only professionally but even in your own personal life," Nacario furthered.

A typical lady-executive

For a busy-bee like Nacario one may conclude her of having an infinite round a clock and 25-hour human living. But Nacario is like other women, juggling work and finding leisure in her almost dawning life. Nacario's answers to such queries will utterly change impressions and will lead to realization that beyond her stature is a witty and amicable part.

Can you describe yourself when you're not in the office?

I've always been seen as a fast-paced person, someone who's always on the go. My job requires an immense amount of time for socializing and constant interaction with people. So outside work, I prefer to stay home and fix my room and stuff. I'm actually a homebody but I do enjoy going out with real close friends to talk about life in general. I consciously find time to be with my mom especially during weekends after I lost my dad. It's not an obligation but a gesture to show love and gratitude.

How do you spend your leisure time?

Going to spa is my way to destress especially after an out of the country business trip. I sometimes play badminton. I love shopping but I seldom have the time to do it that's why I just normally do my shopping in Duty Free when I'm on a business trip. I have two cute dogs that I play with when I'm not too tired. I also love going to the beach. I've been to nice resorts in other countries but for me, Boracay and Palawan are still the best.

What makes you busy aside from your work loads?

I love reading but I hardly finish a book because of the many emails that I have to attend to. Having said that, reading emails has become a hobby. I'm so attached to my laptop PC that I bring it anywhere even when I'm in a salon. I'm not a music lover but my new iPod Nano makes me enjoy music more nowadays. I love going to new restaurants, I've always enjoyed Thai, Japanese, Italian and Filipino food. Recently, I started to love Persian food as well.

How much of HP has already been incorporated in your daily lifestyle? Do you use business others to use HP products?

Yes, HP has so much influence in my daily life. Other than the dependency on my laptop PC for my everyday work and tons of emails, my iPAQ as my calendar assistant

and phone, my all-in-one printer for all my daily printing needs, the HP culture has become a part of me already. Yes, I encourage other people to use HP products especially those that I personally enjoy and those that have been useful to me. I've always been so passionate in sharing the positive experiences I get on technology products.

What are the things you can't live without?

I still can't imagine life without my family and friends. I also can't imagine it without a decent work. I'm sure I'd struggle without my mobile phone, laptop PC, car and wallet. In another perspective, I don't think I can survive without prayers.

How do you balance your career with personal life?

Maintaining a work life balance is really tough especially when your job requires so much time and attention. However, it is a discipline that has to be in place. To tell you frankly, I haven't really been successful in striking a good balance between work and personal life, yet I'm consciously working on it. I've been so used to working late at home, which I'm trying to lessen now. It's a conscious effort to keep my weekends for my personal stuff, bonding time with Mom and friends, church service on Sundays and other personal activities. However, it is equally important that you focus and don't waste anytime when you're at work.

A purpose-driven life

A life without an objective makes it futile and barren, thus Nacario wanted to possess a purpose-driven life. "We don't just live to work or we don't just work to live. Life should have a purpose to make it worthwhile. Knowing your purpose in life is a continuous quest. What's important is you know how you can add value to your work to your family and to other people's lives," she stressed. Attributed to her success is maintaining and enriching her life physically, emotionally, socially, and spiritually.

She may be on the top of her mountainous successes yet Nacario persists on striving for the best and upholding her current status. "There are still a lot of things that I want to accomplish in HP. Aside from maintaining our leadership position in the market, I still want to grow our business in areas that we have not penetrated. I also would want to see myself contributing further in promoting and advocating computer literacy in the Philippines. I really hope that with the help of IT tools and education, we would be able to change the lives of our less fortunate countrymen," Nacario stated of her future goals.

About HP

HP is a technology solutions provider to consumers, businesses and institutions globally. The company's offerings span IT infrastructure, global services, business and home computing, and imaging and printing. For the fourth fiscal quarter ended Jan. 31, 2006, HP revenue totaled \$87.9 billion. More information about HP (NYSE, Nasdaq: HPQ) is available at www.hp.com.

ADT



Epitome of women in IT

Traveling her boulevard of success

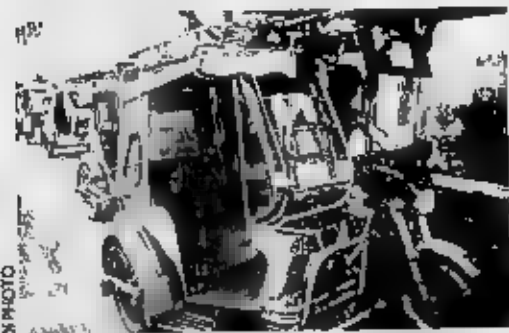
Nacario started her career in HP, she never imagined, in ICT industry. "I biggest local IT distributor exposure. That was that this is the industry and become successful."

Nacario took her stride in HP, having all the giving her most pride. "I would rather say best in all the jobs that I'm a very committed professional before I continuously look for ways to improve myself. I've gone a long way in HP. It was not just a job, it was a continuously she furthered."

Nacario reached the climax of her career when she moved to HP's previous stint in Siemens. She joined HP in 1999. After she moved to a friendly HP in 2001 and there for almost three years, her boulevard of success still led her back to HP. She celebrated her 10th anniversary in HP in mid-2004. In HP, she has an arsenal of knowledge and capabilities that HP put in her, allowing her to understand the positioning of HP's wide array of products in the market appropriately. Her extensive work experiences made her versatile and allowed her to recommend several ideas and concepts.

As HP PSG and IPG Country General Manager, Nacario believed that individuals possess unique strength and capabilities that if put together could yield tremendous results. Her ultimate mission is to develop

LTO: Rising number of tricycles offsets drop in other PUV registrations



Low capital requirement lures many to go into tricycle operation business.

By Daxim L. Lucas

NEARLY 900,000 PUBLIC UTILITY vehicles are now plying the country's overtaxed and underdeveloped road network, with tricycles being the most popular form of transport, according to the Land Transportation Office (LTO).

Latest data from the LTO showed that there were already 898,028 four-wheeled motor vehicles registered all over the country as of end-2005. This represents an increase of 1.47-percent or

13,021 units from the level reported as of end-2004.

According to the LTO, the most ubiquitous mode of transportation in the country is the tricycle with a total of 584,698 units registered as of end 2005. This means tricycles accounted for 65 percent of the country's public utility vehicles.

Tricycles are often difficult to regulate on the road, their drivers often violating traffic regulations with impunity. The sheer number of tricycles on Metro

Manila's primary and secondary roads, for example, makes it difficult for traffic enforcers to catch each violator.

According to the LTO, registered tricycles also posted the largest increase in number among all types of public utility vehicles in 2005, rising 29,358 units from end-2004 level—mainly because operators are attracted by relatively low start-up and operating costs.

The LTO figures also revealed that the number of public jeepneys operating throughout the country declined by

4,229 units last year to 210,348 units. Last year also marked the third year since 1990 when registered jeepneys declined in number.

The number of registered buses also declined in 2005.

According to the LTO, 22,385 buses were registered across the country last year, representing a slight decline from 24,080 units in the previous year.

The number of taxis plying city streets also declined from 47,346 units in 2005 to only 40,442 units in 2005.

DBP increasing funds for wholesale lending

Assisting more livelihood projects

By Doris C. Dumlaog

STATE-OWNED DEVELOPMENT BANK OF the Philippines is planning to increase by 24 percent its wholesale lending portfolio this year to P42 billion from P33.9 billion in 2005.

DBP president Reynaldo David said that in 2005, P9.4 billion in new wholesale loans were booked, bringing the bank's total outstanding wholesale loans to P33.9 billion. This accounted for 39 percent of the bank's total loan portfolio, excluding inter-bank loans.

DBP's wholesale lending window, which provided finances to livelihood projects in the country, posted P806 million in net earnings, 23 percent of the bank's net income last year.

"DBP through its wholesale lending operations, continued to ride high amid economic challenges last year," David said during the recent appreciation party for DBP's participating financial institutions.

"By assisting some 8,522 projects nationwide last year, we helped create more than 10,000 additional jobs and earned for the government about P2.6 billion in tax revenue yearly," David said.

He said a major chunk of the wholesale funds were channeled to rural-based industries. Lending to micro, and small and medium enterprises accounted for the bulk of the beneficiaries.

The DBP also awarded Metropolitan Bank and Trust Co. as its most outstanding participating bank for all-around performance in 2005, as the country's biggest bank turned in the "most balanced and substantial participation" in DBP's wholesale lending program.

Bank of the Philippine Islands bagged the most number of citations, such as the award for infrastructure and logistics development, social services development and environmental development. BPI was also inducted to the Hall of Fame after topping the industrial guarantee and loan fund (commercial bank category) and all-around performance categories for the past five years.

First Macro Bank was awarded top bank under the micro/small medium enterprise development program for the rural bank category. For the commercial bank category, Chinatrust Commercial Bank bagged the same award.

For efficient mobilization of funds through loan syndication, Equitable PCIBank was cited as the most active loan syndicator. Citibank Philippines was elevated to the Hall of Fame after topping said category for five straight years.

Land Bank of the Philippines was also cited for being DBP's active partner in the area of securities underwriting and issue management, as well as for its support for the development of DBP's investment banking business.

Chevron adding more service stations, upgrading facilities

By Abigail L. Ho

CHEVRON PHILIPPINES HAS EARMARKED more than P375 million this year to expand its network of service stations, upgrade its underground storage tanks and support the launch of its "clean" gasoline in the country.

In a briefing Wednesday evening, Chevron country chair Randy Johnson said the oil company would embark on a major upgrading this year to keep its foothold in the Philippine market.

After upgrading around 140 stations last

year, he said the company was planning to modernize another 200 stations this year.

It will replace its existing underground storage tanks with ones that are made with double walls of fiberglass, he said.

He said Chevron also continued to replace its lighting systems with those that consumed less energy, in support of the government's energy conservation efforts and in a move to reduce its electricity expenses.

The company will also change the injection systems in its terminals to support its new "clean" gasoline, Caltex with Techron.

BOP surplus of P1.6B seen by yearend

From page B1

BOP surplus in the first two months of the year, but some of those inflows would be used to retire debts later this year, thus reducing the BOP surplus by year's end.

The BOP measures the foreign exchange transactions between the domestic economy and the rest of the world.

Its major components are the current account and the capital and financial account.

The current account records trade in goods and services, as well as cash transfers, such as from migrant workers.

Capital and financial accounts include foreign investment flows.

Any transaction which gives rise to a payment by a Philippine resident, like importation, is a deficit item in the BOP while any transaction which gives rise to a receipt, like exporting or inward remittance, is a surplus item.

Invitation to Apply for Eligibility and to Bid
Republic of the Philippines

Procurement of a Contract for the Construction of the
Rivers Sports and Country Club, Inc. (RSCCI)
Main Clubhouse in Silang, Cavite

- The AFP Retirement and Separation Benefits System (AFP-RSBS), through the Corporate Budget for the contract approved by the Governing Board intends to apply the sum of Two Hundred Twenty Three Million Three Hundred Two Thousand Two Hundred Seventy Two Philippine Pesos (P23,262,272.00) being the Approved Budget for Contract (ABC) in payments under the contract for the Construction of the Rivers Sports and Country Club, Inc. (RSCCI) Main Clubhouse. Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at bid opening.
- The AFP-RSBS now calls for the submission of Letters of Intent (LOI) from potential Bidders to apply for eligibility for Construction of the RSCCI Main Clubhouse, consisting of three (3) contiguous buildings: a Sports Club, a Health Club and a Pavilion situated at By-pass Road, Aguinidillo Highway in Silang, Cavite. Bidders should possess a valid PCAB license applicable to the above type and cost of the contract, have completed a similar contract with a value of at least fifty percent (50%) of the ABC and meet the other minimum eligibility requirements stated in the Eligibility Documents. Interested Bidders must submit their LOIs on or before 5:00 P.M. of 31 March 2006 at CMA-Q RSBS Building 424 Capinpin Avenue, Camp Aguinaldo, Quezon City and secure the Eligibility Documents thereafter. Applications for eligibility will be evaluated on a "pass/fail" basis. The last day for the submission of the accomplished Eligibility Documents shall be on the date of the opening of Eligibility Documents, 17 April 2006 at 9:00 A.M. at the AFP-RSBS Board Room, AFP-RSBS Building, Camp Aguinaldo, Quezon City. Only those Bidders passing the eligibility check will be invited to purchase the Bidding Documents.
- Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations Part A (IRR-A) of Republic Act 9184 (R.A. 9184), otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act," and is restricted, unless otherwise stated, to organizations with at least seventy-five percent (75%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines in accordance with the IRR-A of R.A. 9184. Only Bids from eligible Bidders will be opened. In accordance with the IRR-A of R.A. 9184 a contract will only be awarded to the Lowest Calculated and Responsive Bidder who was determined as such during post-qualification.
- Interested eligible Bidders may obtain further information from the AFP-RSBS and inspect the Bidding Documents at the address given below.
- A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by Bidders that passed the eligibility check upon the presentation of the Notice of Eligibility to the BAC Secretariat, at the address below and upon payment of a non-refundable fee of Twenty Thousand Philippine Pesos (P20,000.00). The Bidding Documents shall be received personally by the bidder or his authorized representative on 19 April 2006.
- The AFP-RSBS will hold a Pre-Bid Conference open to all Eligible Bidders on 04 May 2006 at 10:00 A.M. at the AFP-RSBS Board Room, AFP-RSBS Building 424 Capinpin Avenue, Camp Aguinaldo, Quezon City. Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders' representatives who choose to attend at the address below on 19 May 2006.
- Eligible Bidders must submit their Bids at the address below on or before 19 May 2006 at 9:00 A.M. All Bids must be accompanied by a bid security in the form of cash, certified cashier's check, manager's check, bank draft or irrevocable letter of credit and 7% of the sum of Two Million Two Hundred Twenty Three Million Two Thousand Two Hundred Seventy Two Philippine Pesos (P2,232,272.00) or an equivalent amount in a freely convertible currency. Late Bids that are not accepted. Bid opening shall be on 19 May 2006 at 9:05 A.M. at the AFP-RSBS Board Room, AFP-RSBS Building 424 Capinpin Avenue, Camp Aguinaldo, Quezon City. Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders' representatives who choose to attend at the address below on 19 May 2006.
- The AFP-RSBS reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

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AFP Retirement and Separation Benefits System
AFP-RSBS Building, 424 Capinpin Avenue
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CALENERGY WINS AN ANVIL AWARD

CalEnergy International recently received an Anvil Award of Merit for its Casencan Watershed Pilot Reforestation Program for successfully implementing an information dissemination and educational campaign to increase community awareness on the importance of watersheds and the need to protect them from degradation. Organized by the Public Relations Society of the Philippines, the Anvil Awards is considered to be the "Oscar" of Public Relations practice in the Philippines.



Photo shows CalEnergy International President Joseph Sullivan receiving the Anvil Award of Merit trophy from Ms. Kori Limbo, Executive Director of Mode Matrix Manila, the agency tasked by CalEnergy to implement the PR component of the Casencan Watershed Pilot Reforestation Program. Joining Mr. Sullivan is CalEnergy Vice President and Corporate Counsel Linda B. Castillo.

Palace moves to fast track dev't of halal export sector

Boosting RP chances in \$150-B global market

By Ronnel W. Domingo

MALACANANG HAS ORDERED concerned agencies to harmonize efforts to promote and develop the local halal export industry.

The order was contained in Memorandum Order No. 201, which was signed last December. It was referring primarily to government policies on compliance to international standards of the halal trade.

The harmonization of policies on halal is expected to improve the chances of the local industry to penetrate the \$150-billion global market for halal food products.

Halal is an Arabic word that can be generally translated as "permissible." In relation to consumables, it refers to products that Muslims are allowed to use, eat and drink.

MO 201 was also aimed at ensuring the effective implementation of the Halal Export Trade Development Program and capturing a sizeable share of the global market.

The agencies involved in the promotion and development of the industry are the Departments of Trade and Industry, Health, Agriculture, Science and Technology, Tourism, and the Office of Muslim Affairs.

"We do not want our exporters to

be left out of the halal market. We want them to be competitive and be able to take advantage of opportunities (that abound)," Trade Secretary Peter B. Pavila said.

In its recommendation for the issuance of MO 201, the DTI said progress of the program had been delayed by the "fractious" halal efforts of different agencies and non-government organizations in the country.

The department cited as proof the United Arab Emirates' confiscation of foodstuffs from the Philippines two years ago due to non-compliance of the products to halal standards even though they were "certified" halal.

SMC to buy P500M worth of cassava from Mindoro yearly

By Michelle V. Remo

FOOD AND BEVERAGE GIANT SAN MIGUEL Corp. has forged a deal with the local government of Oriental Mindoro for the purchase of at least P500 million worth of cassava yearly from farmers in the province.

Congressman Rodolfo Valencia, representative of the first district of Oriental Mindoro, told reporters yesterday that the local government and farmers' cooperatives have started working on the development of 10,000 hectares of land into cassava plantations to match to meet the province's commitment to SMC.

Valencia said Oriental Mindoro expects to finish preparing 10,000 hectares of land before the end of the year. The goal of the local government and farmers' cooperatives was to develop a total of 20,000 hectares to generate P1 billion in revenue a year.

"We will be very competitive in the production of cassava given the size of our available land," Valencia said in a press briefing. He said the local government of Oriental Mindoro would also ask other large companies to buy the province's agricultural produce.

Valencia said SMC would use cassava as input in the production of alcoholic beverages.

Oriental Mindoro's aggressive efforts to market its agricultural products come with the local government's initiative to boost business activity in the province. Aside from developing its agriculture sector, Valencia said, the province was also targeting to increase revenue from other industries, especially tourism and power.

On April 5-7, the local government of Oriental Mindoro, with the help of partners Shell Exploration BV (SPEX) and the University of Asia and the Pacific, will hold an investment summit where business potentials of the province will be discussed before potential foreign and domestic investors.

Valencia said the local government of Oriental Mindoro had considered infrastructure development as its key agenda this year to help attract investors.

The national government has agreed to earmark P1.2 billion this year for the improvement of Oriental Mindoro's national highway, while other farm-to-market roads are also being completed.

LRTA to press for fare hike bid

By Daxim L. Lucas

THE LIGHT RAIL TRANSIT AUTHORITY YES-terday stressed the need for Malacañang to approve its P10 fare hike petition to help it recover large operating losses.

The renewed call for a fare increase came a day after the transportation department withdrew its petition for a similar fare hike for the Metro Rail Transit (MRT) system, saying the riding public could not afford the additional cost.

In a telephone interview, LRTA Administrator Me. Robles said the proposed fare hike—if approved by President Arroyo—would raise up to P900 million in additional revenue per year. This will reduce by the same amount the yearly government subsidy to the rail operator.

Robles said the fare hike became necessary as early as 2004.

The LRTA board has approved an average fare hike of P10 for LRT line 1, which runs from Caloocan to Baclaran, and LRT line 2 which runs from Recto to Santolan, Pasig.

Robles said the P900 million the state would save by approving the fare hike could be used for other government projects in the fields of education and health care.

"Right now, even non-riders are subsidizing the fares of LRT riders," Robles said, explaining that tax revenues were used to support LRT's operations.

"With the fare increase, we can shift the burden to those who are actually riding LRT trains."

The proposed fare hike would not be enough to bring the firm to its break even point, but will still help reduce its dependence on state support.

Daxim Lucas

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BUSINESSFriday

Does your billboard have stopping power?

Signage was the earliest form of advertising used by Egyptian merchants

By Karen V. De Asis
Contributor

IF NEW YORK HAS Times Square, home to one of the world's best and spectacular displays of billboards, Manila has Edsa from the junction of Mandaluyong to Makati that is filled with huge advertising visuals, earning it the tag billboard avenue.

Early billboard forms

Billboards happen to be the world's oldest form of advertising. Signage was the earliest form of

marketing communications used by the first Egyptian merchants who chiseled sales and promotional messages on stone tablets, later posting them along public roads.

Improvements in printing production led to the evolution from hand-chiseled stone tablet signs to more aesthetically designed posters, originally called bills, in the 1800s.

Billboard as a media strategy was originally extensively used by circuses, whose owners invested heavily in advanced promotions. Many of the circus owners eventually became providers of billboards themselves.

In the 20th century, marketers began to seriously look at bill-



US BILLBOARDS now have tourism value.

boards as a means to establish brand awareness. This was also the same period when outdoor shrines like the New York City's Times Square in the East Coast and Hollywood's Sunset Strip in the West Coast rose due to the huge number of spectacular displays by brand icons like Coke, Kellogg, Levi's, Wrigley's, etc. Both shrines reign as the outdoor capital of the world even today. New York City's Times Square extends along Broadway Avenue, 7th, 43rd and 47th streets while Sunset Strip is a 2.2-mile stretch along Sunset Boulevard running between Beverly Hills and the city of Los Angeles. Advertisers are not only encouraged to con-

struct bigger and brighter displays in these areas but the City Planning Commission mandates it due to its tourism value.

Over time, the increasing number of billboard suppliers in the US has led to the creation of the Outdoor Advertising Association of America (OAAA). In the Philippines, a self-regulatory body, the Outdoor Advertising Association of the Philippines, was established in 1964 to help enforce public safety consciousness in the construction of outdoor signs and structures among member companies.

Growth of billboards

DOES/B2-3

CIRCUSES were the first to extensively use billboards as an advance promotion tool.

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Drive Through Water.

Water is no longer an obstacle. With the new RoRo 2GO, you can drive through water with ease.

RoRo 2GO

Henry Sy: Big brother of Filipino entrepreneurs



THE PRESIDENT with the retail taipan.

MANY SUCCESS STORIES HAD its roots in SM. In the late 1990s, SM ran an institutional campaign that featured testimonials from people whose lives revolved around SM. Here's what they had to say about the guiding hand of SM Group Founder and Chair Henry Sy's, who recently received the Big Brother of Filipino Entrepreneurs Award from the Philippine Center for Entrepreneurship.

"Working with SM has allowed me to grow in both artistic and business aspects. I'd like to say that without SM's support and encouragement, there would be no Cesar Gaupo."—Cesar Gaupo,

Fashion Designer

"SM stores have become an important showcase of our products. Apart from this, management has been very supportive—always updating us on new designs and assisting us on the business side. Today, we not only deliver our wrought iron furniture to SM, but export these as well."

The Navarro Family—Rod, Siony, Rocky Store Suppliers

"Since we joined SM, we have grown from a struggling cottage industry to a dynamic business. What makes the difference is the SM management's all-out encouragement and support, which includes helping us get working

capital from Banco de Oro. And the importance it gives its suppliers big and small."

Fely and Emil Nadres Store Suppliers, Barong Pilipino

"The gallery in a mall concept began during the 1991 Sanso exhibit at the SM Megamall."

Today, as a gallery owner at the SM Artwalk, I am impressed at how art has become accessible to practically everyone. At SM, art appreciation has become part of the mall experience."

Evita Sarenas Gallery Owner, Finale Gallery

"SM has been with us throughout all this time, assigning us prime areas in Cebu, which gave

a lot of prestige to our brand, and giving Cebuano entrepreneurs like us a chance to make it in Metro Manila," said Jay and Camille Aideguer of Island Souvenirs.

"It is SM's personal touch that is key to our relationship. As tenants, we're not only given space and left to ourselves. SM's management has given us a lot of encouragement and assurance, and helps us in every way to realize our market potentials."

Paul Almendras and Cesar Montelibano Mail Tenants, Almon Marina

The PCE, a private and non-profit institution that promotes

entrepreneurship education and the development of a Filipino culture of enterprise, unanimously selected Sy. The selection committee agreed that Sy epitomizes the established entrepreneur who has singularly spawned the rise of other competitive Filipino entrepreneurs.

"He has patiently given time to other entrepreneurs, and has continued to redefine the country's business landscape and invigorate the Philippine economy," the committee stated.

Entrepreneurs like Ben Chan of Bench, Johnlu Koa of French Baker attest to his guiding hand in carving out their success.



Republic of the Philippines SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM Davao City Branch

INVITATION TO BID

The Social Security System is inviting offers to purchase by way of sealed bids the following properties:

Description	Property Location	Minimum Bid
1 150 sq.m. TCT No. T-285756 w/ poorly maintained 48.83 sq.m. bungalow	#1212 Mango St. Lot 12, Bldg 2, Sto. Domingo Village 2, Sasa, Davao City	271,000.00
2 206 sq.m. TCT No. T-330264 w/ poorly maintained 47.41 sq.m. bungalow	#695-A San Jose St. Bldg 9 Lot 4, DDF Village, Mandug Davao City	156,200.00
3 150 sq.m. TCT No. T-326967 w/ poorly maintained 46.60 sq.m. bungalow	#26 Dama de Noche St. Bldg 2 Lot 18, landmark Subd. 3, Sasa, Davao City	240,500.00
4 150 sq.m. TCT No. T-330260 w/ poorly maintained 46.33 sq.m. bungalow	#107 Sapphira St. Lot 6, Bldg 1 Landmark Subdivision 1, Sasa, Davao City	219,300.00
5 187 sq.m. TCT No. T-330269 w/ fairly maintained 60.76 sq.m. bungalow	Narra St. Bldg 5, Lot 305 Bldg 9, DDF Village, Mandug Davao City	192,500.00
6 240 sq.m. TCT No. T-330278 w/ poorly maintained 61.38 sq.m. bungalow	#485-A Mercury St. Lot 70 Bldg 4, DDF Village, Mandug Davao City	175,300.00
7 201 sq.m. TCT No. T-330271 w/ well maintained 67.90 sq.m. bungalow	1-349-D-8-B Sunnyville Subd Talomo, Davao City	564,500.00
8 150 sq.m. TCT No. T-288782 w/ well maintained 48.02 sq.m. bungalow	#75 Yakal St. Lot 4-C-3-C-10-A Dona Pilar Vill. Sasa, Davao City	304,500.00
9 142 sq.m. TCT No. T-326065 w/ fairly maintained 74.40 sq.m. bungalow	#116 Range Rover St. Lot 24 Bldg 3, Sapphira Village, Agdao Davao City	392,900.00
10 150 sq.m. TCT No. T-294692 w/ poorly maintained 42.77 sq.m. bungalow	#9 Woodpecker St. Lot 7 Bldg 5, Dona Pilar Vill. Sasa Davao City	240,500.00
11 120 sq.m. TCT No. T-332243 w/ dilapidated 45.60 sq.m. bungalow	Bldg 4, Lot 3, Davao Farms Subd. Agdao, Davao City	169,900.00
12 162 sq.m. TCT No. T-321686 w/ poorly maintained 45.27 sq.m. bungalow	#5911 Chico St. Lot 11 Bldg 9 Sto. Domingo Vill. 2, Pampanga Davao City	318,600.00
13 211 sq.m. TCT No. T-340318 w/ poorly maintained 60.00 sq.m. bungalow	Talayan St. Bldg 4, Lot 107 DDF Village, Mandug Davao City	166,300.00
14 204 sq.m. TCT No. T-330313 w/ poorly maintained 60.76 sq.m. bungalow	Corner Tobes Avenue Mahogany St. DDF Village, Mandug Davao City	166,500.00
15 358 sq.m. TCT No. T-337415 w/ poorly maintained 60.00 sq.m. bungalow	#728-A Visayan St. Lot 11 Bldg 14, DDF Village, Mandug Davao City	253,100.00
16 150 sq.m. TCT No. T-326064 w/ fairly maintained 60.46 sq.m. bungalow	#4 S. Siniguelas St. Lot 5, Bldg 1 Sto. Domingo Vill. 2, Pampanga, Davao City	321,000.00
17 213 sq.m. TCT No. T-340765 w/ poorly maintained 60.00 sq.m. bungalow	#786-A Riverside St. Bldg 16 Lot 17 DDF Village, Mandug Davao City	155,600.00
18 150 sq.m. TCT No. T-330320 w/ fairly maintained 47.70 sq.m. bungalow	#413 Siniguelas St. Lot 3 Bldg 1, Sto. Domingo Vill. 2, Pampanga, Davao City	284,200.00
19 150 sq.m. TCT No. T-326063 w/ poorly maintained 47.70 sq.m. bungalow	Lot 7 Bldg 2, Rambutan Street Sto. Domingo Vill. 2, Sasa Davao City	269,500.00
20 167 sq.m. TCT No. T-330312 w/ poorly maintained 60.00 sq.m. bungalow	Masunurin Est. Lot 65, Bldg 2, DDF Village, Mandug Davao City	168,200.00
21 167 sq.m. TCT No. T-332238 w/ poorly maintained 60.00 sq.m. bungalow	Masunurin Est. Lot 50, Bldg 2, DDF Village, Mandug Davao City	148,200.00
22 192 sq.m. TCT No. T-317300 w/ fairly maintained 46.38 sq.m. bungalow	#156 Camalitan St. Lot 3095-B-5-B-2 Bldg 10-D, Donnasville Subd., Pampanga, Davao City	345,500.00
23 157 sq.m. TCT No. T-330321 w/ poorly maintained 46.50 sq.m. bungalow	#74, Lanzones St. Lot 22, Bldg 7 DA Pampanga Homes Pampanga, Davao City	290,700.00
24 150 sq.m. TCT No. T-326040 w/ poorly maintained 46.60 sq.m. bungalow	#204 Galaxy St. Bldg 5, Lot 8 Victoria Hgts Subd., Marnay Davao City	286,000.00
25 150 sq.m. TCT No. T-347093 w/ poorly maintained 51.18 sq.m. bungalow	#287 Castilleja St. Lot 27, Bldg 4, landmark Subd. III, Sasa, Davao City	238,400.00
26 261 sq.m. TCT No. T-347101 w/ poorly maintained 60.00 sq.m. bungalow	858-A Marlon Ave. Bldg 4, Lot 29 DDF Village, Mandug, Davao City	299,100.00
27 154 sq.m. TCT No. T-347102 w/ fairly maintained 60.00 sq.m. bungalow	Makara Est. Bldg 2, Lot 60 DDF Village, Mandug Davao City	144,300.00
28 187 sq.m. TCT No. T-347103 w/ poorly maintained 60.00 sq.m. bungalow	Angelish St. Bldg 3, Lot 54 DDF Village, Mandug Davao City	152,800.00
29 150 sq.m. TCT No. T-337427 w/ poorly maintained 42.77 sq.m. bungalow	#129 Mango Avenue Lot 15 Bldg 11, Sto. Domingo Vill. 1 Pampanga, Davao City	264,700.00
30 150 sq.m. TCT No. T-347099 w/ poorly maintained 60.00 sq.m. bungalow	Masunurin St. Bldg 1, Lot 29 DDF Village, Mandug Davao City	148,300.00
31 166 sq.m. TCT No. T-358992 w/ fairly maintained 46.50 sq.m. bungalow	#146 Gold & Diamond Sts. Lot 27 Bldg 2, landmark Subd. 1 Sasa, Davao City	279,300.00
32 240 sq.m. TCT No. T-337408 w/ poorly maintained 60.00 sq.m. bungalow	#914-A Mandug Main Road Bldg 1, Lot 6, DDF Village, Mandug, Davao City	232,100.00
33 154 sq.m. TCT No. T-337407 w/ fairly maintained 60.00 sq.m. bungalow	Masunurin St. Bldg 3, Lot 27 DDF Village, Mandug Davao City	211,200.00
34 170 sq.m. TCT No. T-337414 w/ poorly maintained 70.00 sq.m. bungalow	Camagong St. Lot 22 Bldg 1 Poly Subdivision, Marnay Aplaya, Davao City	429,400.00
35 150 sq.m. TCT No. T-347098 w/ poorly maintained 46.60 sq.m. bungalow	#014 Pearl St. Lot 13, Bldg 3 landmark Subd. 1, Sasa Davao City	244,700.00
36 180 sq.m. TCT No. T-337434 w/ poorly maintained 50.24 sq.m. bungalow	#26 Mountain Dew St. Lot 2-B-1-A-1-10-A B-3-B-5, Dumay Toril, Davao City	214,200.00
37 160 sq.m. TCT No. T-326051 w/ poorly maintained 45.60 sq.m. bungalow	#211 Mars St. Lot 11, Bldg 5 Victoria Hgts. Subd., Marnay Davao City	312,000.00
38 150 sq.m. TCT No. T-326974 w/ fairly maintained 70.17 sq.m. bungalow	#121 Woodpecker St. Lot 3 Bldg 4, Dona Pilar Village, Sasa Davao City	304,500.00
39 161 sq.m. TCT No. T-288720 w/ fairly maintained 47.70 sq.m. bungalow	#342 Rambutan St. Lot 2, Bldg 4 Sto. Domingo Vill. 2, Sasa, Davao City	286,900.00
40 148 sq.m. TCT No. T-347097 w/ poorly maintained 40.00 sq.m. bungalow	Makara St. Bldg 3, Lot 2 DDF Village, Mandug Davao City	112,400.00

(PDI-March 24, 2006)

Description	Property Location	Minimum Bid
41 150 sq.m. TCT No. T-337421 w/ fairly maintained 42.73 sq.m. bungalow	#42 Dama de Noche St. Lot 13, Bldg 3, landmark Subd. III, Sasa, Davao City	257,100.00
42 150 sq.m. TCT No. T-339636 w/ fairly maintained 51.78 sq.m. bungalow	#208 Rusal St. Lot 12, Bldg 2 Landmark Subd. 3, Sasa Davao City	268,100.00
43 196 sq.m. TCT No. T-347075 w/ poorly maintained 50.00 sq.m. bungalow	Metatino St. Bldg 2, Lot 31 DDF Village, Mandug Davao City	176,200.00
44 150 sq.m. TCT No. T-340369 w/ poorly maintained 44.55 sq.m. bungalow	#80 Oriole St. Lot 8, Bldg 5 Dona Pilar Village, Sasa Davao City	239,500.00
45 150 sq.m. TCT No. T-339631 w/ well maintained 53.10 sq.m. bungalow	#11 Narra St. Lot 678-D-17-A-1-H Reddo Village, Puan Davao City	370,900.00
46 163 sq.m. TCT No. T-339629 w/ poorly maintained 50.51 sq.m. bungalow	#18 Malvern/Neza Sts. Lot 14 Bldg 3, Dona Pilar Village, Sasa Davao City	282,200.00
47 150 sq.m. TCT No. T-339623 w/ poorly maintained 85.35 sq.m. bungalow	#25 Dango Siling St. Lot 12 Bldg 4 Sto. Domingo Subd. 1 Pampanga, Davao City	333,100.00
48 177 sq.m. TCT No. T-339624 w/ poorly maintained 60.00 sq.m. bungalow	Luzones St. Bldg 9, Lot 273 DDF Village, Mandug Davao City	155,900.00
49 222 sq.m. TCT No. T-382231 w/ fairly maintained 60.62 sq.m. bungalow	Corner Daisy B Sunflower Sts. Lot 2, Bldg 4, landmark Subd. 3 Sasa, Davao City	356,400.00
50 150 sq.m. TCT No. T-339993 w/ poorly maintained 48.33 sq.m. bungalow	#092 Ruby St. Lot 9 Bldg 3 landmark Subd. 1, Sasa Davao City	236,100.00
51 212 sq.m. TCT No. T-329298 w/ poorly maintained 47.33 sq.m. bungalow	#5917 Cashew St. Lot 17 Bldg 8, Sto. Domingo Vill. 2 Pampanga, Davao City	331,600.00
52 150 sq.m. TCT No. T-342127 w/ poorly maintained 80.26 sq.m. bungalow	#192 Quezon St. Lot 5, Bldg 15 Sto. Domingo Vill. 1, Pampanga, Davao City	322,100.00
53 150 sq.m. TCT No. T-286535 w/ poorly maintained 52.57 sq.m. bungalow	Lot 3, Bldg 2 Bontol St. Dona Pilar Village, Pn 7, Sasa Davao City	302,800.00
54 175 sq.m. TCT No. T-346321 w/ poorly maintained 57.10 sq.m. bungalow	#23 Vemas St. Lot 3, Bldg 4 Victoria Hgts Subd., Marnay Davao City	364,000.00
55 219 sq.m. TCT No. T-329251 w/ poorly maintained 46.50 sq.m. bungalow	#86 Leo St. Lot 2-C Davao Housing Subd., Toril Davao City	319,900.00
56 150 sq.m. TCT No. T-329287 w/ well maintained 75.71 sq.m. bungalow	Lot 2 Block 6, Dona Pilar Vill. Sasa, Davao City	624,700.00
57 150 sq.m. TCT No. T-329256 w/ poorly maintained 46.60 sq.m. bungalow	#181 Mahogany St. Lot 3 Bldg 3, Sto. Domingo Vill. 1 Pampanga, Davao City	252,180.00
58 150 sq.m. TCT No. T-285715 w/ fairly maintained 82.93 sq.m. bungalow	Lot 8, Bldg 11 #12 Jericho St. St. Michael Vill. 1, Marnay Davao City	396,200.00
59 154 sq.m. TCT No. T-342126 w/ poorly maintained 57.69 sq.m. bungalow	#073 Garnet & Sapphire Sts. Lot 1, Bldg 2, landmark Subd. 1 Sasa, Davao City	294,500.00
60 213 sq.m. TCT No. T-329280 w/ poorly maintained 61.39 sq.m. bungalow	#760-A Visayan Drive, Bldg 16 Lot 14, DDF Village, Mandug Davao City	166,600.00
61 156 sq.m. TCT No. T-329288 w/ poorly maintained 50.45 sq.m. bungalow	#25 Lawan St. Lot 1, Bldg 3 Dona Pilar Vill. Sasa Davao City	271,400.00
62 150 sq.m. TCT No. T-342125 w/ poorly maintained 37.35 sq.m. bungalow	#195 Daisy St. Lot 1, Bldg 1 landmark Village 3, Sasa Davao City	288,100.00
63 200 sq.m. TCT No. T-347080 w/ poorly maintained 60.83 sq.m. bungalow	Talayan St. Bldg 4, Lot 104 DDF Village, Mandug Davao City	186,100.00
64 150 sq.m. TCT No. T-286531 w/ poorly maintained 46.60 sq.m. bungalow	#190 Quinino St. Lot 4, Bldg 1 Sto. Domingo Vill. 1 Pampanga, Davao City	242,700.00
65 183 sq.m. TCT No. T-352527 w/ poorly maintained 60.00 sq.m. bungalow	Mahogany St. Lot 1, Bldg 1 DDF Village, Mandug Davao City	174,900.00
66 150 sq.m. TCT No. T-285720 w/ poorly maintained 47.70 sq.m. bungalow	#564 Dalanghita St. Lot 4 Bldg 6, landmark Subd. Sasa Davao City	273,300.00
67 151 sq.m. TCT No. T-352528 w/ poorly maintained 43.15 sq.m. bungalow	#501 Amethyst St. Lot 1 Bldg 5, San Juan Village, Sasa Davao City	250,400.00
68 178 sq.m. TCT No. T-286530 w/ poorly maintained 46.60 sq.m. bungalow	#113 Jacinto St. Lot 2, Bldg 9 Sto. Domingo Vill. 1, Pampanga, Davao City	285,400.00
69 150 sq.m. TCT No. T-317294 w/ poorly maintained 42.77 sq.m. bungalow	#81 Yakal St. Lot 4-C-3-C-7 Dona Pilar Village, Sasa Davao City	263,300.00
70 150 sq.m. TCT No. T-325231 w/ fairly maintained 49.33 sq.m. bungalow	#121 Azucena St. Lot 10 Bldg 2, landmark Subd. 3 Sasa, Davao City	290,500.00
71 156 sq.m. TCT No. T-329288 w/ poorly maintained 53.34 sq.m. bungalow	Lot 1, Bldg 6, #12 Molave St. Dona Pilar Vill. Sasa Davao City	277,300.00
72 189 sq.m. TCT No. T-328373 w/ fairly maintained 46.80 sq.m. bungalow	#29 Narra St. Lot 15, Bldg 1 Lea Subd., Marnay Davao City	359,800.00
73 150 sq.m. TCT No. T-340375 w/ fairly maintained 42.77 sq.m. bungalow	#126 Mahogany St. Lot 4-C-3-C-5 Dona Pilar Village, Sasa Davao City	255,100.00
74 217 sq.m. TCT No. T-325234 w/ poorly maintained 43.50 sq.m. bungalow	#129 Scorpio St. Bldg 2, Lot 7 Davao Housing Subd., Toril Davao City	286,200.00
75 150 sq.m. TCT No. T-347090 w/ fairly maintained 42.00 sq.m. bungalow	#6 Leiby Road, Lot 878-D-17-A-2-D Reiko Village, Puan Davao City	244,200.00
76 150 sq.m. TCT No. T-342122 w/ poorly maintained 42.77 sq.m. bungalow	#69 Igal Igal St. Lot 4-C-3-C-10-F Dona Pilar Village, Sasa Davao City	245,900.00
77 150 sq.m. TCT No. T-288768 w/ poorly maintained 52.36 sq.m. bungalow	Ph 7, Sasa, Davao City	288,000.00
78 150 sq.m. TCT No. T-285753 w/ poorly maintained 58.84 sq.m. bungalow	#85 Yakal St. Lot 4-C-3-C-5 Dona Pilar Village, Sasa Davao City	275,900.00
79 150 sq.m. TCT No. T-339628 w/ poorly maintained 42.77 sq.m. bungalow	#131 Mango St. Lot 23, Bldg 11 Sto. Domingo Vill. 1 Pampanga Davao City	261,700.00
80 150 sq.m. TCT No. T-330249 w/ fairly maintained 66.84 sq.m. bungalow	#207 Uranus St. Bldg 6, Lot 14 Victoria Hgts. Subd., Marnay Davao City	374,300.00
81 150 sq.m. TCT No. T-340381 w/ fairly maintained 56.06 sq.m. bungalow	Lot 8, Bldg 2 #21 Dama de Noche St. landmark Subd. 3 Sasa, Davao City	301,600.00
82 150 sq.m. TCT No. T-285703 w/ poorly maintained 42.77 sq.m. bungalow	#71 Yakal St. Lot 4-C-3-C-10-C Dona Pilar Subd., Pn 5 Sasa, Davao City	257,200.00
83 160 sq.m. TCT No. T-285696 w/ poorly maintained 48.60 sq.m. bungalow	#162 Vemas St. Bldg 3, Lot 4 Victoria Hgts. Subd., Marnay Davao City	311,200.00
84 150 sq.m. TCT No. T-285713 w/ poorly maintained 44.99 sq.m. bungalow	#455 Dalanghita St. Lot 5, Bldg 5 Sto. Domingo Vill. 2, Pampanga Davao City	247,800.00

Description	Property Location	Minimum Bid
85 159 sq.m. TCT No. T-342105 w/ poorly maintained 37.35 sq.m. bungalow	#728 Sunflower-Gumamela Sts. Lot 2, Bldg 4, landmark Subd. 3 Sasa, Davao City	247,400.00
86 300 sq.m. TCT No. T-385290 w/ poorly maintained 65.32 sq.m. bungalow	Lot 3-B-1-34, Sitio Francisco Subd., Calinan, Davao City	278,200.00
87 150 sq.m. TCT No. T-342109 w/ poorly maintained 52.54 sq.m. bungalow	#596 Chico St. Lot 6, Bldg 9 Sto. Domingo Vill. 2, Pampanga Davao City	270,800.00
88 200 sq.m. TCT No. T-342111 w/ poorly maintained 40.00 sq.m. bungalow	#535-A Dona Ana St. Bldg 2 Lot 4 DDF Village, Mandug Davao City	138,100.00
89 150 sq.m. TCT No. T-329278 w/ fairly maintained 75.68 sq.m. bungalow	#114 Honolulu St. Lot 2 Bldg 1 Dona Pilar Village, Sasa Davao City	307,400.00
90 150 sq.m. TCT No. T-320764 w/ poorly maintained 90.15 sq.m. bungalow	#327 Rambutan St. Lot 1 Bldg 2 Sto. Domingo Vill. 2, Sasa, Davao City	334,100.00
91 206 sq.m. TCT No. T-325242 w/ fairly maintained 85.27 sq.m. bungalow	Lot 1-C-1-N Greenland Vill. Dumay Davao City	353,200.00
92 151 sq.m. TCT No. T-329275 w/ poorly maintained 42.77 sq.m. bungalow	Lot 27 Bldg 4, #95 Yakal/Narra Sts., Dona Pilar Vill. Sasa Davao City	244,600.00
93 205 sq.m. TCT No. T-329286 w/ fairly maintained 76.60 sq.m. bungalow	Bldg 4, Lot 19, Victoria Hgts Subd., Marnay, Davao City	463,400.00
94 200 sq.m. TCT No. T-380403 w/ poorly maintained 51.00 sq.m. bungalow	#280 Everest St. Lot 557 C-3 C-3-D-4 C Pampanga Exec.Homes, Pampanga, Davao City	410,000.00
95 150 sq.m. TCT No. T-342131 w/ fairly maintained 72.87 sq.m. bungalow	#071 Garner St. Lot 3 Bldg 2, landmark Subd. 1 Sasa, Davao City	307,400.00
96 150 sq.m. TCT No. T-342103 w/ well maintained 69.40 sq.m. bungalow	#124 Sunflower St. Lot 4, Bldg 5 Alpha Homes, Marnay Aplaya, Davao City	593,100.00
97 150 sq.m. TCT No. T-316808 w/ poorly maintained 48.30 sq.m. bungalow	#445 Siniguelas St. Lot 5, Bldg 4 Sto. Domingo Vill. 2, Pampanga Davao City	262,300.00

PANABO CITY

98 216 sq.m. TCT No. T-171976 w/ fairly maintained 39.90 sq.m. bungalow	#8894 Arguelles Subd., Lot 2 Bldg 6, New Visayas Panabo City	189,900.00
99 216 sq.m. TCT No. T-169851 w/ fairly maintained 46.71 sq.m. bungalow	#1858 Camia St. Lot 324-F 12-C, Medalla Subd., Cagangohan, Panabo City	202,000.00
100 250 sq.m. TCT No. T-193553 w/ poorly maintained 41.00 sq.m. bungalow	#7695 Coring Subd., Lot 8 Bldg 3, San Vicente Panabo City	106,000.00
101 202 sq.m. TCT No. T-191368 w/ fairly maintained 61.11 sq.m. bungalow	#6852 Arguelles Subd. Lot 14 Bldg 1, New Visayas Panabo City	257,100.00
102 240 sq.m. TCT No. T-194093 w/ poorly maintained 43.10 sq.m. bungalow	#1867 Medalla Subd. Lot 324-F-8, Cagangohan Panabo City	215,300.00
103 240 sq.m. TCT No. T-194092 w/ fairly maintained 46.71 sq.m. bungalow	#1875 Medalla Subd. Lot 324-F-2, Cagangohan Panabo City	202,300.00
104 240 sq.m. TCT No. T-194097 w/ fairly maintained 54.20 sq.m. bungalow	#1651 Lot 324-F 12-A Medalla Subd., Cagangohan Panabo City	250,600.00
105 250 sq.m. TCT No. T-170980 w/ well maintained 93.55 sq.m. bungalow	#7641 Camiao Subd., Lot 165-F 9 San Francisco, Panabo City	414,300.00
106 264 sq.m. TCT No. T-172207 w/ poorly maintained 48.00 sq.m. bungalow	#5009084 Yakal St., Lot 5-E, Lila Homes, New Visayas, Panabo City	216,700.00
107 265 sq.m. TCT No. T-172208 w/ poorly maintained 48.00 sq.m. bungalow	#5007093 Lila Homes, Lot 5-D New Visayas, Panabo City	211,800.00
108 210 sq.m. TCT No. T-171951 w/ fairly maintained 85.60 sq.m. bungalow	#7777 Camiao Subd., Lot 3 Bldg 12, San Francisco Panabo City	236,500.00

It started with pizza weekends in NY



GOLDILOCKS bakeshop's new look

Consumers

Uy says in an interview that eye-catching window and store-front displays get customers' attention and bring them through the door. "Good visual merchandising throughout Abca keeps customers interested and walks them through an intuitive and natural shopping path through the store so they don't miss out on any home furnishing discoveries," Uy says.

Abca invested in market research, analysis and creativity to come up with the look in its three showrooms, done in partnership with SB Konzept, its strategic partner-supplier that has set up multiple showrooms in over 40 countries.

The effort has been paying off as customers have been coming to the store even if Abca was launched only a little over a year ago.

Abca offers a wide range of European and Asian-styled furnishings and accessories and these are arranged in full room set-ups for the customers to picture how the furniture would look in their home.

Abca does not follow trends or styles in visual merchandising. Rather, it sticks to the basic principles of visual merchandising.

For Abca design manager, Architect Nap Mina, principles revolve around the belief that visual presentation of merchandise must excite the customer.

"Our store concept is built around our target customer, so here at Abca, we will never stop trying to innovate and improve our offers and services to better delight our customers," Uy says. "As customer tastes and expectations evolve, so will we."

Shakey's

Pizza chain Shakey's has been

From page B2-4

in the Philippines for more than 30 years, and significant changes have been put in place since 1994 to give the stores a younger, fresher look.

Sales have picked up since then and the pizza chain's general manager attributed it to two factors: the classic thin crust pizza and unique interiors, which include wooden signs and windows allowing people to see how pizza is made.

The changes entailed expenses but Shakey's says these were needed to bring the pizza chain up to the next level, including those in the area of visual merchandising and point of purchase displays.

"Guests appreciate it when the overall look and feel of the restaurant complements in every aspect," says Meggie Jose, Shakey's marketing director. "Not only do guests see what products or promotions you have through the posters or banners in the restaurants but through the wall murals which show product shots and the personality of the brand."

Jose says Shakey's developed its new look based on the customers' comments, focus group discussions and from looking at competitors and other retail outlets.

For the new look, Shakey's brought back certain furniture and fixtures unique to the brand, such as stain glass windows and classic furniture.

In terms of POP materials, Shakey's used posters, flyers and banners to support new products or promotions.

She says gone are the days when restaurants just feature the food to get people to come into the store. These days, the need to provide the right ambience has never been more important.

THE LEGACY STARTED OUT AS A neighborhood affair. Back in New York during the '50s, Arturo and Lita Fernandez would get together with their Italian neighbors on weekends. The regular scene then was Arturo kneading the pizza dough and Lita preparing the rich tomato sauce. The delightful smell of the couple's pizza would invite not just their brood of children, but also many of the neighborhood's kids. The Fernandezs became as equally known as their pies.

When the Fernandez family finally moved back to Manila, the same tradition was practiced every weekend. The couple would tirelessly make pizza for their close relatives and friends, who would not miss any gathering at the Fernandez residence. Eventually these relatives and friends encouraged the couple to put up a pizza house. On April 1, 1957, at the Fernandez family's residential garden on Menlo Road, Pasay City, Di' Mark's Garden was formally opened. As one of the pioneers of the pizza industry in the country, Di' Mark's was named after the Fernandez family's youngest son Marky.

The couple started out with borrowed tables and chairs. The rest is history.

Since then, Di' Mark's pizza garden was not just known during Saturday eat-outs but for everyday dining as well. It became the favorite place of their grandparents, who lived to concoct various original home-cooked pizzas.

Fast forward to present

The business was handed on by the couple to their children and now grandchildren. Leading the pack are Nina Fernandez-Asad and husband Jay, together



PIZZA place was named after Fernandez's youngest son Marky

ARTURO and Lita Fernandez, founders of Di' Mark's Pizza with their brood in the '50s.

with their own children. Di' Mark's legacy continues. They take pride in serving grandma Lita's tasty tomato sauce cooked in olive oil, garlic, onions, and imported spices, and grandpa Arturo's dough, made in combo of thick and thin crust, not too breadly on top, crispy at the bottom.

According to Nina, old patrons could attest that Di' Mark's pizza hasn't changed at all. Actually, they became even better. From the very first original pizza recipe called "Menlo special," baked with grated yellow and native cheese (kesong puti) instead of mozzarella, Di' Mark's came up with other distinctly delicious pizzas. Since Arturo worked in a sausage factory in Brooklyn, Di' Mark's uses home-made Italian sausages, together with mush-

rooms and green pepper, to make the Arturo special. And because Nina's older brother loves pizza and taco, they thought of putting chili beef, chopped onions, tomatoes, shredded cheese and crispy lettuce on pizza crust instead of on taco shells. Thus, was born the Taco pizza.

Two of Di' Mark's best sellers are the pizza Pro and Mad scramble pizza. The former is topped with anchovies, mushrooms and pepperoni. On the other hand, you'll get heavy with the latter's toppings: Italian sausages, pepperoni, mushrooms, green peppers, onions, garlic, black and green olives, chicken and tomatoes.

For health conscious and veggie lovers, they also have vegetarian pizza with mushrooms, green and black olives, green

pepper, onions, garlic and tomatoes. If ever you are craving for more, Di' Mark's is the right place because they serve the "Big ZZ," literally means ZZ toppings on one pizza.

Also, Di' Mark's will fulfill your pizza fantasy. You can create your own pizza, choosing toppings that you prefer. Not only that, Di' Mark's pizzas are complemented with a good choice of yummy appetizers, mouth watering soups, delectable pastas, tasty main dishes and even sinful desserts.

The almost half-a-century-old pizza place continues to dish out its unique pizza flavors. From Pasay Road, it moved to Makati Avenue. Today, Di' Mark's is at the third level of Greenbelt 3, Makati City and has branches in Tomas Morato, Wack-Wack and Commonwealth areas.

Philam Plans Sales: Serving the Filipinos

By Joel Nigos

MORE AND MORE FILIPINOS seek jobs abroad. Recent data from the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration (POEA) showed that Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs) grew by 5.2% totaling to 981,000 OFWs in 2003. Some however, still remain optimistic and refuse to give up on having a better tomorrow for their country and their people. Many still believe that hope is within reach and continue to succeed in their chosen fields.

OFW turned top District Manager

Eric Bautista is a Mechanical Engineer by profession. Just like most people who sought greener pastures, he left for Saudi Arabia in 1991 and practiced his line of work in the Middle East. When on vacation, he used to drive his father, Francisco Bautista, a top Philamlife agent, in his client visits. "Pero habang tumatagal ako sa Saudi Iala akong naho-homesick" (The longer I stayed in Saudi the more I got homesick), shares Eric so he decided to come back to the Philippines in 1997, for good. In search for a new career, Eric found himself becoming a sales associate for Philam Plans in 1998 after constant prodding from his father. "Nakita ko kasi yung pasasalamat ng mga tao sa tatay ko kaya para sa akin heartwarming yun. (I saw the people's gratitude towards my father and that to me is heartwarming) he shares. "Naramdaman ko yung tuwa nila dahil para sa kanila naging maayos ang buhay nila ngayon dahil sa plano na kinuha nila" (I felt their

gladness, their lives are now better because of the plans they bought). Eric realizes that as a sales associate of Philam Plans he can now provide for his family without leaving them behind and even help others secure their future through pre-need plans. Now Eric's impressive sales performance gave him the distinction of being among the top District Managers nationwide — following his father's legendary record.

Knowing people's dreams and the market's needs
Philam Plans No. 1 District Manager Alma Clarino continues to offer Philam Plans products as she sees them as solutions to Filipino's needs. "I usually tell my clients that we have what I call permanent problems in life which need permanent solutions — we all need to send our kids to school and we'll all grow old," she says, adding that permanent solutions to these problems can be by way of availing pre-need plans.

Wife of former PBA player Boy Clarino, Alma joined Philam Plans in 1995. Her sales career has in fact turned into a family affair with Boy and their two daughters, Anna Cristine and Abigail Courant joining in the more recent years. "I believe that we're helping Filipino families plan their future. It's something that they do not see now but I know they would appreciate when the time comes." Like most Philam Plans sales associates, Alma found a deeper meaning in her job — closing a deal meant a chance to make a difference.

Concepcion Arcena is one of Philam Plans' top District Managers and believes that success in sales means understanding your target market. It's also necessary, she says, that she is able to get her message through — getting a pre-need plan is not an expense. "Pag isapit kasi nila na dagdag na gastos ito, hindi nila ito isasama. Kaya dapat ituring nila ito na kailangan nila sa buhay para bigyan nila ng pansin." (If they see it as an additional expense they won't even think about it. They must consider it as a future need for them to take notice) she explains. As a former teacher, Concepcion understands the need to prepare for the future especially for the children's education, it is this same mission which encouraged her to join the pre-need business in 1991.

Inspiring a new generation

Carol Bautista, Philam Plans top Agency Manager believes in different strokes for different folks. "There are various things that motivate people," she says. "They have different needs, and as an Agency Manager I need to know them for me to be able to inspire them." Just like Eric and Alma, she considers selling pre-need plans as a service to people. "This is what I share with my sales associates during trainings, that more than closing a deal, it is important that your clients understand why they're buying these plans and why these are very important," she says.

This is maybe what was planted in the mind of Ronald Ignacio, a Sales Counselor under Carol's agency. Ronald was able to top the Sales Counselor's category last year. His background in banks and finances, plus Philam Plans' six-year record of being number one in pension helps him



PHILAM Plans SVP and Head of Sales and Marketing Roland U. Gaerlan congratulates Eric T. Bautista, one of its top District Managers.



RONALDO A. Ignacio (center) receives his award as Top Sales Counselor from Philam Plans Chairman Jose L. Cuales Jr.



PHILAM Plans P&CEO Jesus G. Holliba awards Concepcion D. Arcena, District Manager Rising Star.



CAROL B. Bautista receives Top Agency Manager Award during Philam Plans Annual Awards from Philam Plans Chairman Jose L. Cuales Jr.



PHILAM Plans gives recognition to the Telemarketing Group w/ Felly Ayala at center.

"With Philam, not only will their plans return a very good yield but more than that they are assured that they are dealing with a financially stable and trusted company."

sell these plans to his corporate clients. Providing very good after-sales service is what he believes is the key why he was able to top his category.

The changing times has called for new marketing strategies and sales distribution approaches. Though using a non-traditional distribution channel, Unit Manager Felly Ayala was able to reach out and help people secure their future through telemarketing. For her, properly investing ones hard-earned money especially for those who have enough savings is an important decision he has to make in life. "This is where the name Philam plays a big part," she says. "With Philam,

not only will their plans return a very good yield but more than that they are assured that they are dealing with a financially stable and trusted company." So whether they will use the money for their children's schooling, for their retirement or for any other purpose, they are more than guaranteed that they will get their money when it matters.

Providing Filipinos better careers and a secure future
For Eric, Alma, Carol, Ronald, Concepcion and Felly, every deal is an opportunity to reach out to the public and educate them of the benefits of pre-need plans—a philosophy in line with Philam Plans' mission of saving dreams, memories and children's future.

Philam Plans at present has more than 20,000 sales associates nationwide, providing job opportunities to more and more Filipinos. Its sales associates undergo extensive training to equip them with the necessary skills and knowledge to become effective financial planners. Further, it provides career advancement as sales associates can become Unit Managers, District Managers or Agency Managers. They are also amply rewarded with travel incentives, scholarships on top of the cash rewards that go with closing a deal. Philam Plans has been the No. 1 pre-need company in the last four years with over 500,000 planholders or one-third of the total pre-need market. Philam Plans also has the largest and most liquid trust fund among pre-need companies, enough to cover the P600 million projected maturing benefits in 2006 and the rest of its planholder obligations until 2013. Backed by its mother company, Philamlife, the most trusted name in life insurance for the past 60 years and American International Group (AIG), the world's leading insurance and financial services organization, Philam Plans continues to enjoy the growing public trust and confidence of Filipino families. *With Grace Del Rosario*

For comments and inquiries please email author at joelnigos@inquirer.com.ph or philamplans@big.com

Does your ...

From page B2-1

In more recent years, the billboard's role in creating awareness and purchase intent has been recognized. A number of factors have fueled this growth.

1. Dramatic increases in vehicle ownership and the increasingly mobile lifestyle of individuals.
2. Women migrating from income to out-of-home. Women as primary buying influencers in the past were easier to reach. This changed as more and more women began to work and marketers had to think of ways to reach them outside their homes.
3. The medium's capability to reach targeted consumers while they travel to their daily destinations.
4. The medium's flexibility to reach specific target markets around their lifestyle e.g. billboards mounted close to the workplace, homes and neighborhoods, shopping districts, schools, etc.
5. Technological improvements in the production of large format signs today do justice to the product or service features.

How effective are billboards

A consumer perception study mounted by the Starcom Research in 2000 revealed the following:

1. Size and uniqueness of billboards drive memorability. Likewise, simple, concise messages in smaller billboard formats.
 2. People like billboards that entertain.
 3. People expect billboards to change every so often, specially for high-recognition brands.
 4. The perception that everyone hates out-of-home advertising is unfounded.
 5. Transit riders enjoy the entertainment and distraction of billboard messages more than rush hour traffic.
- An FBRS usage, attitude and image survey conducted in 2003 complemented the Starcom research. The findings revealed:
1. A billboard's unique design is an attribute that drives awareness and recall of advertising.
 2. Use of bright, cheerful colors is preferred.
 3. People like billboards in gen-

eral as revealed by 96 percent of the respondents who gave overall positive comments.

Successful billboard attributes

While billboards are enjoying a surge in media usage, marketers are challenged to present their billboards in ways that rise above the clutter. Some of the attributes that marketers can look into include the following as culled from a 2000 Sensory Logic Creative Test mounted in late 2000:

1. Stopping power. Successful billboards must have excellent stopping power. These include among others, the use of strong color contrasts between foreground and background elements; use of colors with deep saturation; avoidance of cluttered or very austere formats and use of a story line with dramatic tension or suspense to engage viewer interest.
2. Readability. These include making the picture image big, alive and simple; making the message clear; developing copy that is short yet full of punch and creating a seamless design with simple and clear texts and fonts.
3. Message clarity. Avoiding excessive brain teasing, ability to relate messages to familiar experiences and situations and emphasis on the product as hero or helper are dimensions of message clarity.
4. Memorability. These include the use of a powerful anchor visual element and images that hinge on real-life experiences.

Where to billboards?

Technology, highly targeted markets, new and emergent lifestyles are likely to lead to newer, more exciting billboards and out of home formats. Some exciting executions include beautifully designed wall murals and building shrink-wraps, live billboards, storefront scaffolds and street furniture, among others.

The writer is a professor of Marketing Management and Brand Management at the De La Salle Professional Schools Graduate School of Business and is chief learning officer of Marketing Knowledge Series Training and Consultancy. Feedback at kda-sis@skyinet.net



ALMA C. Clarino receives Top Awards for District Manager (center) with husband Boy Clarino from Philam Plans executives Jose L. Cuales Jr. (right) and Jesus G. Holliba (left).

BUSINESSFriday

Consumers do judge a store by its looks



By Tina Arceo-Dumlao

WHOEVER SAID YOU CAN NOT JUDGE A book by its cover was surely not referring to retail stores.

How could he, when in the business of selling products or services, first impressions could make or break a business?

Thus, serious retailers bent on keeping competition at bay invest in research, hire technical experts and experiment with styles and colors to make their stores and products

look good.

Russ Alfonso, owner of RS Concepts, one of the biggest providers of visuals and POP (point of purchase) displays in the country, tells the INQUIRER that retail outlets now appreciate how having the right visuals and displays can set them apart from other stores.

He stresses that since buyers do not have a lot of time on their hands and are bombarded with different images when they walk through a mall or go through the aisles of a grocery, they need some visual stimuli for

them to train their eyes on a particular store or item.

POP displays that move, he says, and mini video clips shown on LCD screens are particularly effective because movement always attracts attention.

He expects more companies to install these "wobblers" and LCD screens as the cost of these displays drop closer to the level of the static displays.

Colors also have an effect with studies showing that "hot" colors like orange and yellow attract more attention than "cold" colors like green.

"There's a science to all this," he says, "but at the end, there is really only so much that visuals can do. There is something to be said about giving incentives."

Goldilocks

Leading bakeshop and food outlet Goldilocks has undergone many changes throughout 40 years in the business because it has always believed in putting its stores and products under the best light possible.

This is because it takes less than 10 seconds for companies such as Goldilocks to convert browsers into buyers.

Pinky Yee, head of marketing of Goldilocks, refers to the 10 seconds as the "first moment of truth."

"The first moment of truth is mainly visual. It is most likely that your target market will see your establishment or product before they hear, smell or taste it," Yee says. "Therefore, your visual merchandising and point of purchase displays must have a well-deliberated structure to attract your target audience and convey your brand identity."

Yee explains that in marketing, "notice to trial" are three very important and related words that companies must keep in mind to attract new customers.

For Goldilocks, Yee says there have been major changes in the logo, color schemes and even the uniforms of the in-store staff—all designed to make Goldilocks more attractive to the public.

Some of these changes include the installation of new menu boards in stores with food visuals, in favor of displaying the actual food items.

This was prompted by findings that said actual food displays are not an important factor in a customer's decision to eat in the store.

Goldilocks also introduced a self-service bakeshop versus the "behind the counter" approach, allowing customers to handle Goldilocks products before buying.

Abea

Like Goldilocks, furniture chain Abea believes in the importance of creating a certain "look" to attract buyers.

Abea business development manager Jason

CONSUMERS/B2-3

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PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER

Who will be next? **American Idol**

Who will be next? **ABC**

Who will be next? **Hea Tayo!**

Who will be next? **ClickTheCity.com**

Channel	2:30PM	3:00PM	3:30PM	4:00PM	4:30PM	5:00PM	5:30PM	6:00PM	6:30PM	7:00PM	7:30PM	8:00PM	8:30PM	9:00PM	9:30PM	10:00PM	10:30PM	11:00PM	11:30PM
ABC 5	Yapungko Chino	Sports Director's V	Plasido de Amor	Like Andy	Mr. Bean	Naruto	Outstanding	Secret	Golden Ng	St. Ping Mo	Pandora	Big News	Outdoors	Real Stories	Inside				
ABC 5N 2																			
ADN																			
Cartoon Network	Johnny Bravo	Dexter's Laboratory	Tom & Jerry	Baby Looney Tunes	Code Name: Kids	Elder's House	The Cat	Telescopio	Pang Pang	The Gnomes	Wu-Gu	Powerful Gals	Art & King	Beeman	World Sport	World News Asia	World News	World Sport	
Chinese One	Young at Heart																		
Chinese Two																			
CHN																			
Crisol/Suspense																			
Discovery Channel																			
Disney Channel	Mr. Bean	Mr. Bean	Mr. Bean	Mr. Bean	Mr. Bean	Mr. Bean	Mr. Bean	Mr. Bean	Mr. Bean	Mr. Bean	Mr. Bean	Mr. Bean	Mr. Bean	Mr. Bean	Mr. Bean	Mr. Bean	Mr. Bean	Mr. Bean	Mr. Bean
ESPN																			
ETC																			
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Fox News																			
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MYX																			
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SBN 21																			
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Savdo 23																			

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LIFESTYLE

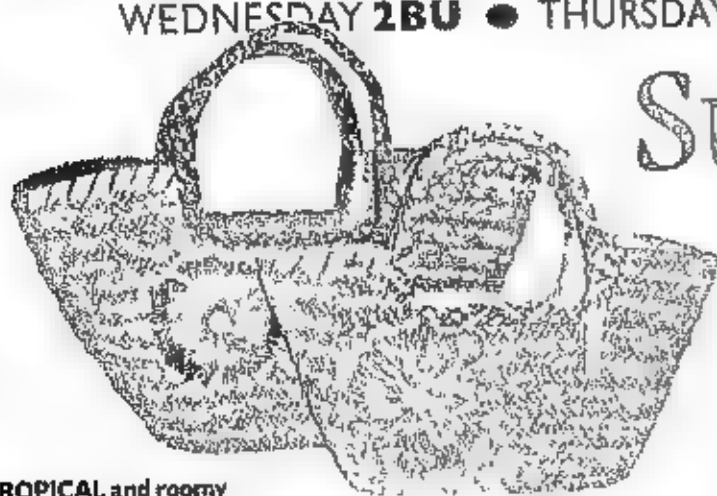
Editor Chelo Banal-Formoso

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FLORALS on cotton twill bag from Benetton 2006 Spring-Summer Collection

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Sunny and bright canvas and straw totes in yellow, orange, blue and white with leather flower appliques speak of warm, breezy days on the beach. Check out these harvests from United Colors of Benetton.

From Segue come light cotton bags with fun prints, from pretty beauty tools and makeup to funky newsprint and girl-power logos. United Colors of Benetton is available at all Gift Gate stores. Segue is available at SM Megamall and Glorietta 2, Ayala Center, Makati.

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Save Up with BPI and Upgrade Your Lifestyle!

A lifestyle upgrade is an exciting prospect for many of us. After all, who wouldn't want to drive home a brand new luxury car, move to a more upscale neighborhood or simply have more cash at one's disposal?

Now, the Bank of the Philippine Islands lets you upgrade your lifestyle, whatever stage in life you are in—whether you're just starting out, somewhat successful or already accomplished. Get a chance to move from the usual to the grand when you join BPI SAVE UP, MOVE UP promo. As the title suggests, you have a chance to move up in life when you save with BPI.

The promo is open to all peso and foreign currency individual account holders who open or maintain Savings, Checking or Time Deposit Accounts with BPI, BPI Family Savings Bank or BPI Direct Savings Bank. Every P5,000 deposit in savings or checking or P25,000 in a time deposit entitles a depositor to get one (1) electronic raffle coupon. The more you save, the more chances of winning.

Three exciting lifestyle prizes will be raffled off. In the first draw, BPI gives you the chance to double your total deposit balance by as much as P500,000. You may use this big inflow of fund in whatever way you want.

The second draw prize is one that the entire family will love. Get a chance to win a stylish Volvo V50 station wagon. With the Volvo V50 family trips will never be the same again.

Lastly, the prize for the third draw is an upgrade anyone will surely welcome. BPI is giving you a chance to own a posh studio unit at The Columns Ayala Avenue, one of Makati's most vibrant condominium residences. This is perfect when you want to start out on your own or for newlyweds who wish to start their new life together in style. It can also be the best gift a parent can give his child. You can also use it as an investment because it appreciates in value.

But that's not all. On top of BPI SAVE UP, MOVE UP's exciting raffle, a depositor is also entitled to get a BPI Electronic Gift Card worth P1,000 for every P300,000 new or additional deposit in savings or checking. The gift card comes in the form of a BPI Express Cash Card. Unlike other gift cards which limit your shopping to selected establishments, you can use the BPI Express Cash Card in over 45,000 MasterCard Electronic establishments nationwide to purchase anything and everything you desire.

So start saving with BPI today! Who knows, you could be in for a fabulous lifestyle upgrade! For more details, visit any BPI, BPI Family Savings Bank branch or Express Banking Center. You may also call 89-100 or log on to www.bpiexpressonline.com.

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Simply open or maintain any BPI Peso or Foreign Currency Savings, Checking or Time Deposit. Every P5,000 in your savings or checking account or P25,000 in your time deposit entitles you to one (1) electronic raffle coupon. The more you save, the more chances to win.

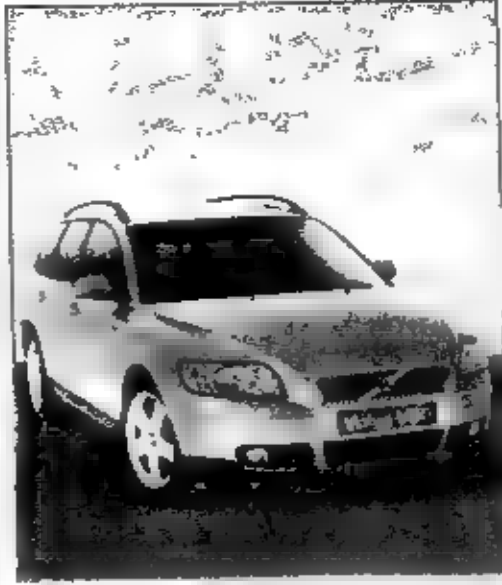
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1ST DRAW:

FROM EXPECTED TO EXCEPTIONAL!

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VOLVO for life



3RD DRAW:

FROM SIMPLE LIVING TO THE ULTIMATE IN URBAN LIVING

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THE COLUMNS

PLUS!

Get a free BPI Electronic Gift Card worth P1,000 for every P300,000 additional or new deposit in savings or checking account.

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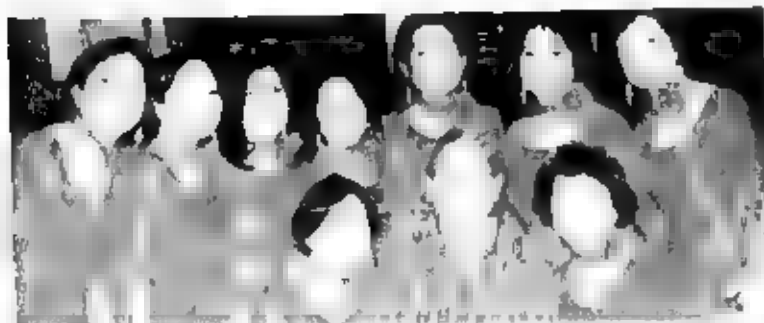


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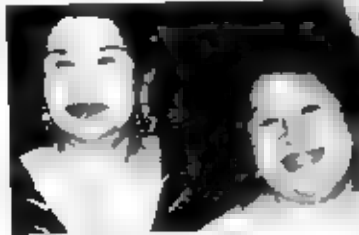
LIFESTYLE



STANDING: Marilyn Teotico, Ayds Valencia, Daisy Mendoza, Christy Zialcita, Merle Villacorta, Nini Mitchell and Dolly Galang. **Seated:** Marian Pablo, celebrator Bob Tenchavez and Marieme Pimentel



EMCEES Bob Garcia and Anna Sobrepena



KATE Gordon and Pinky Tanjanco



SAN BEDA HS Class '62 members and wives: Rene and Carmela Azurin, Dina and Mario Soriano, Bob Tenchavez, Barbo and Queenie Mills, Doris and Joey Venezuela, Mon and Isa Guevarra, and Benny de la Cruz



BEDANS: Raffy Ramirez, Alex Evangelista, Lito Bermuda, Archib Evangelista, Eddi Mendoza, Edgar Talavera, Alan Lee and Willie Pelino de "New York, New York!"



SURPRISE! Betsy Basa T. escorts husband, business magnate Bob Tenchavez, to his birthday party.

Surprise birthday bash for sexagenarian

"SHHH..." THE INVITATION instructed us. "It's a secret, please don't tell, but when Bob Tenchavez comes, let's all yell... 'Surprise!'"

It was definitely a super surprise party, *palangas*. To Bob, as to most of us young at heart, age is strictly a case of mind over matter. If you don't mind, he says, it doesn't matter.

So when he turned a dazzling 60, he thought it would be a day spent quietly with a Thanksgiving Mass and dinner with his *famille*. He had, in fact, just arrived with his wife, classic beauty Betsy Basa, from a fab Baluc cruise.

But unknown to him, *famille* pals and classmates had spent weeks preparing for a birthday bash with the theme, "For the love of Bob."

Guests were told to come in red, black or white, which were the same colors for the party at the sprawling garden of the Tenchavezes.

Bob was totally unprepared for the big surprise! He was shocked. Even his high-school gang from San Beda were there to greet him.

Guests were then treated to a superb dinner of the best prime ribs, from the Tenchavezes' own resto, Tender Bob's, natch. They also feasted on *paelia*, *lechon*, chicken *sophia*, and blackened *bacalao* by Barbara's. The cuisine had all the invites talking about it for days, *palangas*.

To lighten things up even more, Bob's San Beda class did an Apo Hiking Society medley.

A close pal of Bob and Betsy from their New York days, Nini Mendoza Mitchell jetted in from Singapore to choreograph the women in their awesome "La Vida Loca" number. And for an encore, the men performed "New York, New York" complete with a chorus line, dahhngs.

Bob's granddaughter Lani and son Boom also performed a dance number, amazing everyone.

As a finale, a touching video got everyone on a nostalgic mood, but only for a while. Because *après* the roasting and blowing out of the 60 candles, everyone went to the dance floor, rocking. Later, all staggered home, exhausted but happy. After

WITHOUT HATTING AN EYELASH

Maurice Arcacbe

Photos by Alex Van Hagen using Kodak EasyShare system

all, it was all "for the love of Bob," *n'est ce pas*, as in, *di bala, palangas*.

Go-getting card

At the launch of the Go! Mastercard at the colossal Crown Plaza Hotel, the grand ballroom was transformed into an awesome airport VIP lounge. The invites couldn't praise enough the imaginative flight of fancy.

But the true star of the show was Go! Mastercard, with its new features and extras, such as the Go! Rewards Program that earns you Go! Cash Gift Cards, special gifts and privileges, such as installment programs, and the Go! Balance Transfer Program, "all designed (to boost the cardholder's) purchasing power!"

Go! Mastercard is the latest baby of the Robinsons Retail Group and Cebu Pacific, represented by none other than dashing and brilliant Lance Gokongwei, the president and COO of JG Summit Holdings, Inc. Other Robinsons officials were Jody Gadia, Robinsons Supermarket general manager; Graham Coates, Robinsons Department Store general manager; Bong Mojica, Cebu Pacific general manager; Vera Lim, Cebu Pacific VP for sales; and Tim Jordan.

Gorgeous Bianca Valerio hosted the fun event that featured an energetic performance by Geneva Cruz, who kept all the men wide awake, dahhngs.

A special fashion show had top mannequin and Go! Mastercard model Ornusa Cadness showing off choice pieces from Topshop, Topman, Dorothy Perkins and Robinsons newest international fashion label, Wallis!

Raffled off were Robinsons gift certificates and free Cebu Pacific trips for two to any local destination and a round-trip ticket for two to Hong Kong, natch.

Ready, *palangas*, get set, Go! Mastercard. Call 8987088.

Fila sails ahead

The sun was hot, the sky clear blue and the wind perfect, *palangas*, as Fila's hot, hot sailors from all parts of the country rushed off to the chi-chi Punta Fuego for the 4th Annual Sailing Fiesta.

Fila's fab happening got on a roll with a super bash at the new Yacht Club Bar.

The club has been organizing a regatta for their members and "we always hold it when the winds change," explained Club general manager Xavi Gimeno. "With 20 Fila sailors taking part in the event, it's a good mix of Fila hobbies, long boats, small boats and sunfish dinghies."

During the registration party, there was Alfred Xerez-Burgos Jr., Landco Pacific's president and CEO, doing the opening remarks. Equally important was when the club's GM, Xavi G., launched the EJ Roxas Perpetual Cup named in honor of the late Eduardo J. Roxas, the first chair of Club Punta Fuego's Marina and Sports Committee, *palangas*.

To officially start the regatta, colorful Fila sails were raised and the participants sailed away into the cool winds of the South China Sea. Meanwhile, the invitees gathered at the Terrazas de Punta Fuego, where they were entertained with DJ music.

The adrenaline shot high, *palangas*, as the guests were given race updates by regatta top chair Jerry Rollin. When the boats sailed past the finish line, participants were welcomed by a sunset party where booze overflowed.

The last three races took place the next day, *palangas*, at Punta Fuego's Lower Beach Club. Crossing the finish line first were Mark Haswell and Karen Dinglasan aboard the Hobie 16 "Bilis Buk." The winners of the EJ Roxas Cup were cool father-and-daughter team Luigi and Yvonne Manzi, who came in second. Dennis Cruz and Iking Paterno finished third. Santi Picornell was named best among the keelboats.

Once the sun had set, it was rock and roll, and, believe me, those sailors really knew how to party to the hot sounds of the Level Up and Liquid Apple group.

JAY and Osang Lim



THE TENCHAVES BOYS. Bob with Butz, Boom and Bobby Tenchavez



PATRICIA Go-Nisce, Lissette Cipriano, Joan Cosico and Norma Causing



CEL Go, IISA, Myrna Alberto, IISA president, and Vincent Go



CEBU Pacific's beautiful couple Simon and Tim Jordan, and Bong Mojica, general manager and COO of Cebu Pacific



ALOY Alday, Cindy Valenzuela, Candice Iyog, Joan Cosico, Anne Young, Lance Gokongwei and Owen Wilson



HOPE Gokongwei-Tang, Graham Coates and Mark Tansilongkun



ALESANDRA Ty and Jeanne Chua



DRAGO Pilipinas team members James Bungubung, Darwin Basas, April Francisco, Jay David, Noli Eala and Artes Fonacier



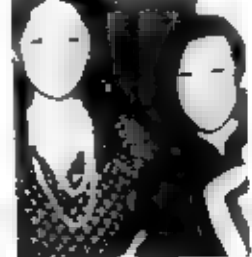
FILA sailors during the 4th Annual Sailing Fiesta



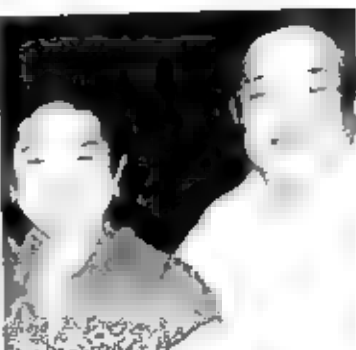
FILA sailors Ronie Ticson and George Huang



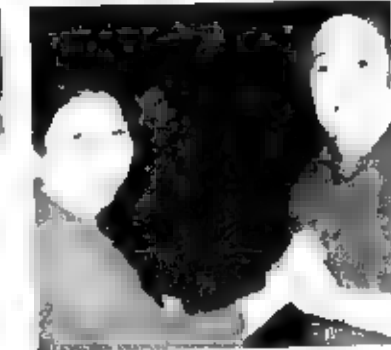
THELMA Guerick, Wanda Louwallen, Mr. and Ms Alex Campbell, Mr. and Ms Ton Vanchlerden and Marieliese Evaristo



MIREN Mendoza and Carmina Quizon



LYLET and Vic Lorenzo, Cryo president



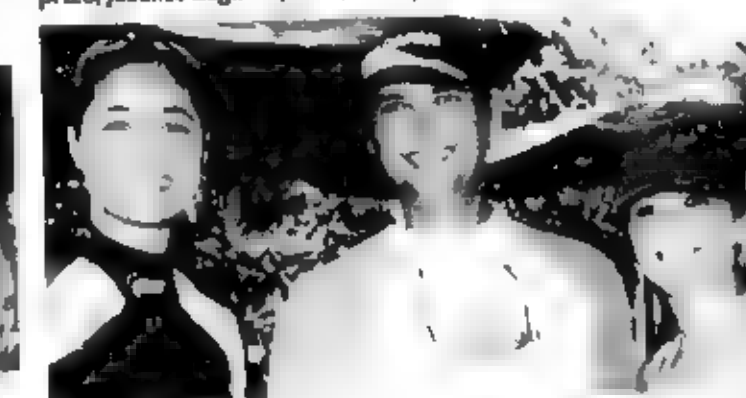
IT'S ROCK-AND-ROLL time. Nini Valdes and Sen. Dick Gordon



PUNTA Fuego club general manager Xavi Gimeno with Karen Dinglasan and Mark Haswell, champs of EJ Roxas Cup



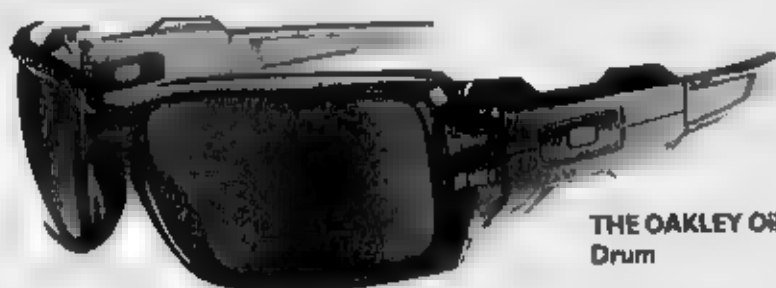
JAIME Legarda of Gray team, second prize; Tong Manalac, Blue, first prize; Joselito Legarda, Pink, third prize; with Jerry Rollin



SAILING enthusiasts include Akiko Thompson, Monchu and Tina Garcia



HIP sunglasses

THE OAKLEY ON
Drum

Shades of summer

GIVE YOURSELF A MAKEOVER AND, IN case you want to start small and easy, set your sights on Oakley's newest eyewear guaranteed to be on the must-have list for the entire year of 2006.

The Razwire Bluetooth sunglasses-cum-gadget is one of Oakley's contributions to the making of a wireless society. It lets you talk within 33 ft of your Bluetooth-enabled cell phone.

Riddle is another one of Oakley's new designs that set the pace of eyewear fashion. The use of a single continuous lens, mounted flush with the outer surface of the frame, is a new design language for Oakley. The style is matched with the clarity of patented XYZ Optics to achieve lens contours that extend peripheral vision. Riddle also comes with an Asian-fit line for those whose glasses sit too low on the nose and have a tendency to slip.

Fives 3.0 improves upon the classic Fives

2.0, being more lightweight and sporty yet fashionable enough for casual wear.

Oil Drum is perfect for those with medium-to-large faces. It's a comfortable fit with the extended wrapped-frame geometry, plus the optional polarized lenses. Large metal icon accents complete the look.

Oakley Spike is physics elevated to an art form. Oakley High Definition Optics protects you from the elements and funky Unobtanium earsocks even provide moisture-wicking comfort.

These new designs were presented at the Oakley and Reef Boracay Invasion, which featured an Oakley Virtual Store in front of Club Paraw where all the beach essentials from Oakley and Reef were sold.

Oakley Eyewear is available at Almeda Optical, Executive Optical, George Optical, Ideal Vision Center, Magno Optical, Optical Works, Sarabia Greenbelt 3, G-Force Rockwell, G-Force Podium, Rustan's Department Stores, Alson Cebu and Avant in Greenbelt 4.

RAZWIRE
Bluetooth sunglasses-
cum-gadget

Children's camp registration

REGISTRATION FOR PROMIL PRE-SCHOOL'S Camp ProGifted 2006 will be on March 26. The series of workshops are designed for children aged 3-7. Camp ProGifted 2006 runs April 17-May 19. Registration fee is P4,500 per child. Parents can get up to P1,500 discount by presenting Promil Pre-School receipts. Registration on March 26 is at Glorietta 2 Lobby Area and, on April 1, at SM Megamall Bldg. A Activity Center. Call Camp ProGifted at Camp Mobile 0908-4408511.

PARENTING TALK. Communito et Missio, in partnership with Sweethearts of Christ and Family Life Apostolate SJRM, will hold a family-oriented event on April 1 at Chavez Gardens 313 Cadena de Amor, Ayala Alabang. Topic of the soiree-type party is "Parenting Today's Children." Ed Soretta is main speaker. The St. James Renewal Movement Praise will perform musical numbers. Admission is free. Complimentary bar chow will be hosted by the Sweethearts of Christ. Love offerings for outreach programs are welcome. Call 6380255/58 or e-mail nancy_hare@globelines.com.ph.

GALA CONCERT. Romanian violin sensation Alexandru Tomescu will perform with pianist Mary Anne Espina at the Philamlife Theater Sunday, March 26, 8 p.m., in an evening of the music of Leclair, Beethoven, Sarasate and Paganini. For tickets call 9007023 or 0910-8851136.

WORKSHOPS. The Rays School offers summer workshops for kids: Theater and Movement, April 24-28; Arts for Toddlers, April 24-29 and May 8-12; Science, May 2-8; Creative Writing, May 2-8 and May 22-26; Rubber Art, May 8-12; Music and Movement, May 8-12 and May 15-19; Electronics, May 15-19; and Illustration and Paper Crafts, May 15-19 and May 22-26. All workshops will be held at 73-A Scout Limbaga St., QC. Workshop fee is P700. Call 3762184 or 0917-6287546.

RAFFLE PROMO. Sta. Lucia East Department Store and its affiliate stores, Planet Toys and Home Gallery, hold the Great Escape Summer Raffle Promo. Shop today up to May 15 and get one raffle coupon for every P500 purchase. At stake are cash and a trip to Boracay. SLE card holders earn double points and two raffle coupons. Grand draw will be on May 18. Meanwhile, Sta. Lucia East Grand Mall's Generation East 2006—the Mode Search will have its final screening today. Call 6815401 loc. 118.

SEMINAR. The Philippine Society of Librarians and Information Specialists (PSLIS) will hold a seminar-workshop "Cataloging and Indexing Updates: An Achievement Workshop," on April 10-12 at 10/F SEC Bldg., Edsa, Greenhills, Mandaluyong City. Call 7241994, 5278351 local 206, 0919-7727876, 5238888 and 0919-6180128.

NEW STORES. Girls who love anything in pink—pendants, flower hair clips, bracelets or candy-shaped ponytails—will surely enjoy the two new stores of Pinkbox, now open at the G/F, SM City Sta. Rosa, Laguna, and soon at the 2/F, Mall of Asia, Pasay City. Known for its wide collection of hair clips, charm bracelets, personalized necklaces and cell phone chains, Pinkbox caters to the young and young at heart. Check out very affordable Ouchless ponytails for all ages in various colors to choose from, at prices ranging from P15 to P59.75.


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Fashion Week newsbits



FASHION Week guests at the NBC tent will be able to sample delicious treats from the Goldilocks GoLite, a line of guilt-free desserts and pastries made with absolutely no sugar.

FOR THE NINTH CONSECUTIVE year, Runway Productions' Philippine Fashion Week, slated from March 31-April 9, will showcase the country's most talented designers, with established names joining the up-and-comers.

As part of its support for the event, Sony Ericsson is unveiling three stylish handsets: the J220i, J230i and W810i.

Billed as "easy" phones, the J220i and the J230i offer a combination of design, ease of use and value-for-money. The W810i, on the other hand, is the latest Walkman phone to strengthen Sony Ericsson's music phone lineup.

A stick phone optimized for even the most clueless techno-

phobes, the J220i has a simplified click menu access. It comes in smooth black and sky blue.

For those who want to be in tune with the world at all times, the J230i will prove to be ideal.

A stick phone that comes in cosmo white, cherry red and deep blue, the J230i has a built-in FM radio.

A satin black phone with orange trim, the sophisticated W810i comes with a 512 MB removable

Memory Stick that can store up to 150 songs. Aside from storing a wealth of music tracks, photos, video and other multimedia files, the W810i also has an integrated two-megapixel auto-focus camera.



SONY Ericsson J230i (above) and Sony Ericsson J220i (left)



WALKMAN PHONE. Groove to your own soundtrack with Sony Ericsson's latest Walkman phone, the W810i, to be launched at Philippine Fashion Week.

Avida

Affordable living at its best
an AyalaLand company

Avida renames New Manila & Sucat Towers

Popular condominium developments Aeropolis New Manila in Col. Bonny Serrano Ave. Quezon City and One Aeropolis Sucat at Dr. A. Santos Ave., Parañaque, were recently renamed Avida Towers New Manila and Avida Towers Sucat, respectively.

The move follows the lead of Laguna Properties Holdings Inc. (LPHI), the developer of both projects, which recently adopted Ayala Land Corp. as its new corporate name.

Offering studio, one-bedroom and two-bedroom units that range in price from P1 million to P3.2 million, Avida Towers New Manila and Avida Towers Sucat provide affordable living to middle-income families, Avida's target market.

The new names better reflect the position of the company in relation to its mission and the aspiration of its clients. Avida is a contraction of "Ave" meaning "to celebrate" and "vida" or "life." Studies have shown that clients of the former LPHI consider their homes as sources of pride and fulfillment — both good reasons to celebrate life, notes Dinna Bayangos, president of Avida. "Avida truly offers affordable living at its best," she says.

Aside from offering units that are built to last, the Avida Towers projects will be managed by Ayala Property Management Corp. (APMC), the Ayala Land subsidiary that maintains properties developed by the property giant and its subsidiaries. By managing building systems such as water and sewerage and overseeing key services such as security, APMC will ensure the upkeep of the Avida Towers.

Banking on the Ayala Land heritage of Avida, unit owners are assured that projects will be delivered as scheduled and that the company will stand by its commitment to homeowners long after the sales have been realized.

When they move into an Avida property, residents are provided with more than just a roof over their heads, but also a thriving community life through amenities that enhance bonding among residents. These include a social or community hall, a swimming pool, jogging paths, and Zen-inspired gardens where they can converge and celebrate life.



Parañaque Mayor Jun Bernabe (2nd from left) graced the Sucat event with Avida executives Steve Dy (left) and Ed del Valle (3rd from left). Event host was DJ Crystal of Magic 89.9 (right).

With these reasons, more and more overseas workers, single professionals, entrepreneurs and young families see Avida Towers as the place where their dreams become realities.

The renaming of its New Manila and Sucat condominium towers was marked with a Mardi Gras last March 11 and 12. The celebration of a new beginning served as the theme of the twin events marked by percussion performance, a magic show, refreshment, souvenir items and fun activities.

Ipo-ipong makulit.

Yan ang baby ko.
Buti na lang, 'pag nagyaya ng "Out!"
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WELL-GROOMED
paraffin nails by
California Nails
and Day Spa

I think French manicure is the safest and looks clean. Plus, I've yet to hear a boy not liking it. Big bonus!

I HAVE A DREAM ROOM. NO, IT doesn't have a flat-screen TV. It's a room where I can get a facial so I don't have to lie on the living room sofa when I'm getting one from Elvie Gonzales (0915-9901231). She is so good, I actually am having second thoughts of putting her number for fear of her not having time for me after this article. I just have to be brave... A room where I can get my manicure and pedicure and body wax.

I think every girl or metrosexual should have such a room. I don't really mind getting a massage in the bedroom. It can be pretty convenient since I doze off anyway. But if I had a separate room to get a massage, then I can just doze off there without having to worry about oil stains. Just imagine...

I can actually go on and on about my dream room. I even have a color in mind and can imagine what it would smell like. I know for sure I would actually look for a CD that plays the sound of running water or of birds chirping. Sometimes I would play Enya.

But I don't have one, thus the word "dream." When I told my husband about my dream room, he said we had an extra room but we were people of substance so it should be a library filled with books instead. At that point I told him straight out that I preferred having a mani-ped room instead of a library because I am a girl who cared about my well-

being first and foremost.

Since he never brought up anything about the extra room again, I still don't know if I would get my dream room.

Pampering

Back to reality. I do love getting mani-peds. Normally, I don't even have them paint on polish since I don't know how to take care of it well.

And I love getting my legs waxed even if I hardly have any hair. It's just that after I pamper myself, I feel good. That's more than enough reason to brave the Makati traffic and visit California Nails and Day Spa in Salcedo. I think they have perfected the art of putting nail polish, French manicure and acrylic.

Since I'm not an adventurous person, I've not had acrylics done since I heard that it damages the nails. But because I'm curious by nature, I asked some friends who have had it done and they said their nails came out fine. Now, I'm open to it.

Let me give you some tips on picking a shade to have your nails painted.

If you are fair-skinned, look for colors with blue undertones. If you want to do a red shade, check out colors with berry tones, and if you want a pink shade, stay away from the ones that are close to beige, since it just makes your skin tone look dull.

If you are medium skin-toned, avoid cool undertones. Try deep browns and warmer shades of pink. Check out Essie's Ballerina Slippers shade in Essences. Morenas should go for warm browns, bright pinks or deep purples. Personally, I think French manicure is the safest and looks clean. Plus, I've yet to hear a boy not liking it. Big bonus!

Rewarding

As a whole, manicures are rewarding whether they are done at a salon or at home. After a long day, having something done or doing it yourself is a definite pick-me-upper. I would think it's better than Prozac when you are feeling down.

After having something done—be it a manicure, pedicure, wax, or a massage—you will leave with a happier, sunnier frame of mind. I guess it's really like that in everything. And when it comes to beauty rituals, the best thing is that the reward is instant. Besides, groomed nails will make you feel like a "truly polished" woman.

When presenting yourself, remember that everything comes into play, not only your clothes and the accessories you wear but most especially your cleanliness, the glow of your skin and how you feel inside. In all honesty, would you rather sport a designer shirt and not have well-kept nails, or a white T-shirt and pretty French tips? Think about it. Aside from the latter costing less, you even get a free massage!



Ria Francisco-Prieto

GET WAXED and bikini ready this summer, thanks to California Nails and Day Spa.



cut
&
keep

Green-eyed but no monster

GREEN IS A STRONG COLOR SO A LOT OF women are wary of using it. You wouldn't want to look like Shrek or a green-eyed alien. So I suggest you use it sparingly.

If you are not comfortable using green eyeshadow, start with green eyeliner. Choose the right shade of green according to your skin tone.

If you are dark-skinned, you're very lucky because all shades of green suit you. For yellow-toned skin like ours, olives and yellow-greens suit us well. Fair-skinned women should be a little careful with bright greens to avoid looking too harsh. The hues can also be overpowering.

Always remember the makeup rule. If you are wearing bold green on your eyes, keep your cheeks and lips understated.

Eyes—I applied a pink base up to her brow bone to even out the color of her eye area. This also gives the illusion of brighter eyes. I skipped eyeshadows and proceeded to apply an emerald green eyeliner on top of her lid.

Start at the innermost eye and just draw a straight line up to the outer eye area. If you have a hard time doing this, just follow the line where your lashes grow.

I also applied the eyeliner on the bottom lash to make her look more exotic and adventurous. I used two shades of green on her lower lash—emerald green on the outer corner and mint olive green on the inner section. This softened the emerald green and kept her from looking too harsh.

The last step was the application of two



AFTER

coats of mascara on the upper lash to open up the eyes.

Products to try—Art Deco Eyeshadows #40 and #44, Mac Eyeliner in Hyacinth

TEXT AND MAKEUP
BARBI CHAN
MODEL: MARY PADILLA



BEFORE

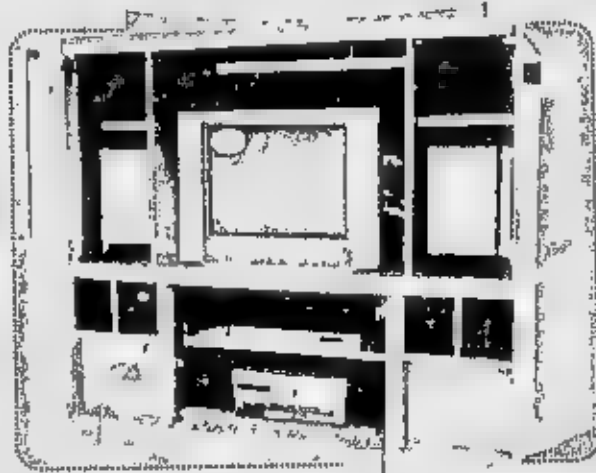
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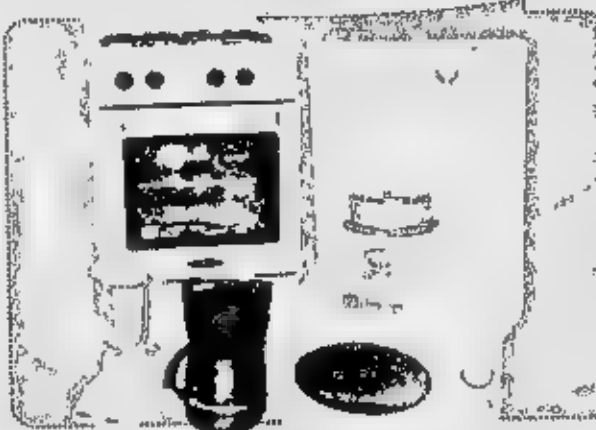
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Preventing summer breakouts

AS SOON AS SUMMER became official, cosmetic companies stopped pushing their moisturizers and anti-aging creams—now it's all face mattifiers and anti-acne lines.

The sad truth is that the aging process does not stop just because the season has changed. In fact, many are now panicking because the creams recommended during the colder months are making their skin break out now. I have compiled my favorites among the road-tested products that firm the skin and abolish lines without making the oily but aging skin break out.

SkinCeuticals C E Ferulic (cal. 2424242 for inquiries). This potent antioxidant serum eases up skin damage, boosts skin protection and stimulates collagen. It may be expensive but it gives the skin a glow that's visible a few hours after application. The effects are cumulative: skin firmness, better color and texture. My jawline and cheek contours are more "lifted" and defined. Applied only every morning after cleansing and toning, its effects actually last up to three days without reapplication as the solution cannot be washed off once rubbed on face, neck and back of hands. Of course I apply it faithfully at least every other day, if not daily. Only a few drops are needed for all these areas so the vial actually lasts a long time. The only downside: It smells like hordog for the first minute, but the aroma quickly disappears.

L'Oreal Revitalift White (P995) This is a multitasking, anti-aging and non-greasy solu-

tion that firms skin, makes pores look smaller, eliminates fine lines and brightens skin tone by fading age spots so that the skin looks more even. It is designed to be used with the anti-aging Revitalift range, but I use it instead with the Skin Refiner pore minimizer line, which controls breakouts and shine, or with the White Perfect range if I feel my skin looks dull. Like C E Ferulic, this is designed to be used under a moisturizer or sun block.

Avon Anew Force Extra triple lifting night cream (call 8642900 for inquiries). I know I'm aging because two years ago when I used this, I found it too rich. But using it lately, I noticed my skin was firmer, non-greasy, glowing and hydrated. Waking up every morning is a thrill for me because my skin always looks so rejuvenated and lifted. Wish they would come up with an equivalent eye cream.

Silky hair

Those who color their hair regularly, whether for fun or out of necessity, suffer from stiff, dull, damaged strands that are hard to comb and control. L'Oreal Powerdose is the quickest and most lasting treatment to whip your hair back into shape.

Talk about having your cake and eating it, too. Hair becomes silky soft and incredibly shiny, worthy of any shampoo commercial. The only catch is that it is not sold to customers but is strictly a salon service. I had mine done at Philosophy salon by Mikaela at Pasay Road, Makati (tel. 8163697).

Baby-soft skin

There are days when I am dying to go to a spa but too lazy or broke to get there. When The Body Shop sent me its Spa Wisdom range I could not have been more thrilled. My choice picks are the African Spa salt scrub that smells like yummy shea butter and sesame, which I apply on dry skin for a thorough but gentle rub down. It is not as abrasive as most body scrubs so it's ideal for daily use on sensitive skin.



THE BODY Shop African Spa salt scrub

One tip though: Use a spatula to scoop out the amount you need because if you dunk your fingers the oil will rot and the mix will spoil as there are no preservatives.

Step two is washing it off with the Dreamboat mix bath, which smells like Lotus and Frangipani. Step three is applying hydrating body purée, which smells like citrus fruits and roses and has a gel texture that feels cool and non-sticky.

For extremely dry areas like the elbows, hands and cracked heels, I highly recommend the Africa Spa Rich Body Balm, which can penetrate the thickest, most dehydrated areas.

E-mail the author at kinnyasalas@yahoo.com



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LET YOUR pink lips speak for themselves with this rosy look from Avon Color.

Hues and shades from sunup to sundown



LOOK morning-fresh with rosy hues and neutral tones from the Avon Color palette.

FIND OUT the latest day and night makeup styles on Fashion Week March 31-April 9.

Some of the city's hottest names in the fashion scene take to the catwalk with Avon Color to show what colors and styles are best for daytime and what is suitable for evening events.

Light plays an important role in the way a woman's makeup looks. In the morning, soft hues like pink or earth tones like tan are best for that fresh and young look.

Toto Bagamasbad keeps things clean and simple with Avon Color Personal Match

HUES/D4

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Hues and shades. . . From page D3

Dual Powder Foundation in Almond. He adds a touch of rosy glow with Rose Lustre blush. For the eyes, it's Taupe and Rich Cream from the Lilac Dream True Color Eyeshadow Quad palette.

Eric Maningat creates something dreamy in pink for daytime, choosing the

rosiest shades from the Avon Color collection—Twinkle and Pink Frosting from the Deepest Rose True Color Eyeshadow Quad and Pink Bouquet Glimmersticks Lip Liner and Avon Color Shine Supreme Lip Color in Glossy Rose.

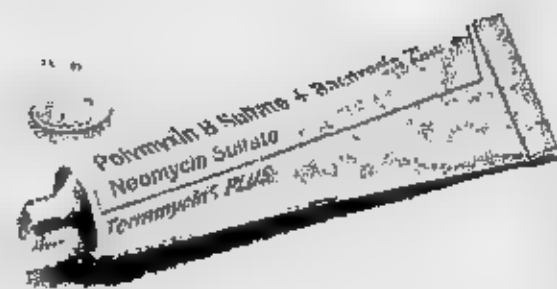
For evening, Jingky Ilusorio exagger-

ates natural Asian features with Avon Color Pure White Pressed Powder in Almond and lines the eyes with Glimmersticks Eye Liner in Black. Lashes are brushed with Avon Color Wash-Off Waterproof Mascara in Black. Blazing red lips are created with Glimmersticks Brick

Red Lip Liner and Ultra Color Rich Lipstick in Red 2000.

Kei Pagtakhan puts the drama in the eyes. He paints the eyes with Deep Sea and Night Sky from Avon's Denim Eye Shadow Quad with a touch of Rich Cream from the Lilac Dream palette.

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There's an alabang life here.

FRIDAY, MARCH 24, 2006

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

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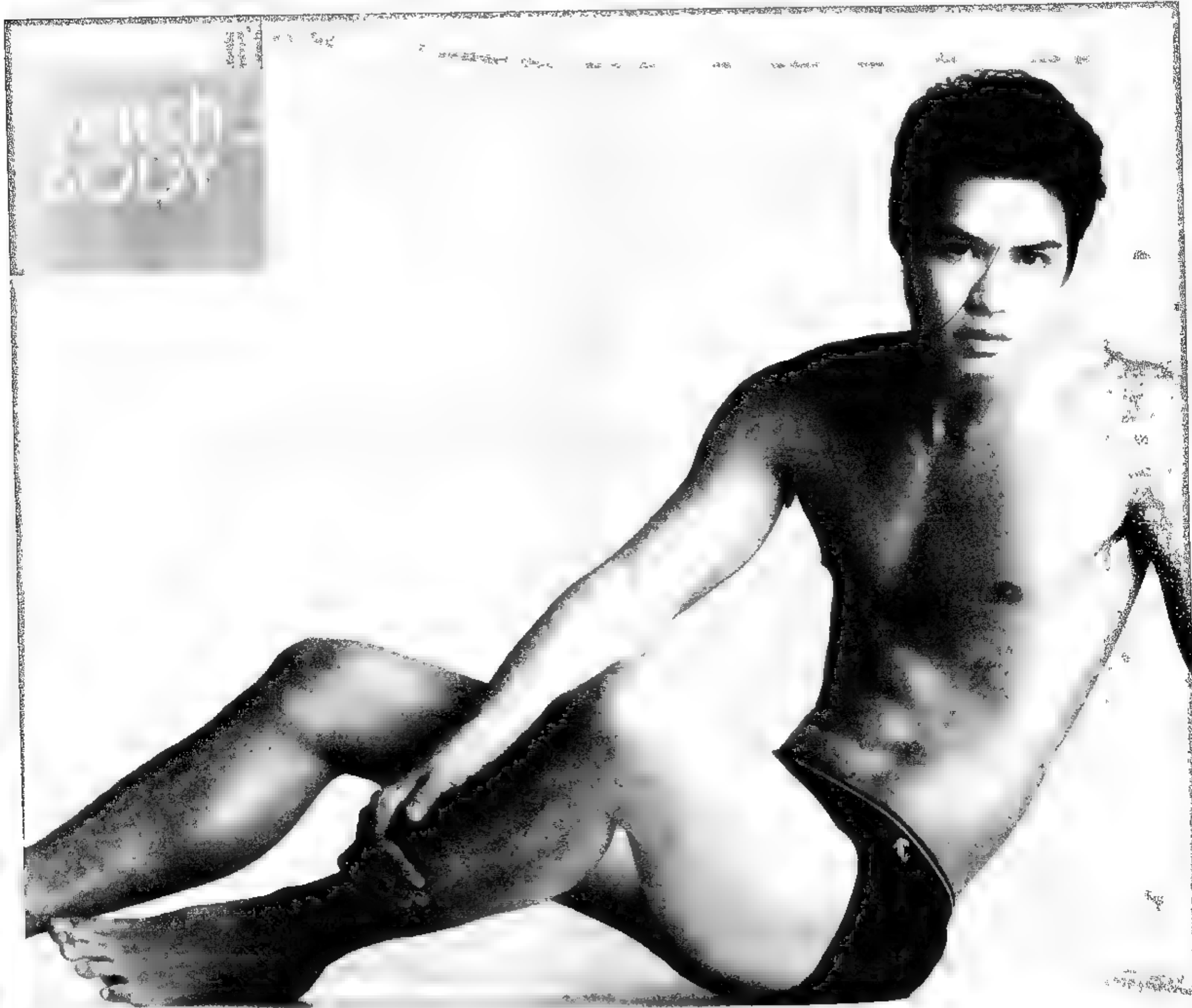


rockin' romantic



Opena, Paris.
Joaquin Paliare y Allustante

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BUX1007 Boxer brief with Tiger logo

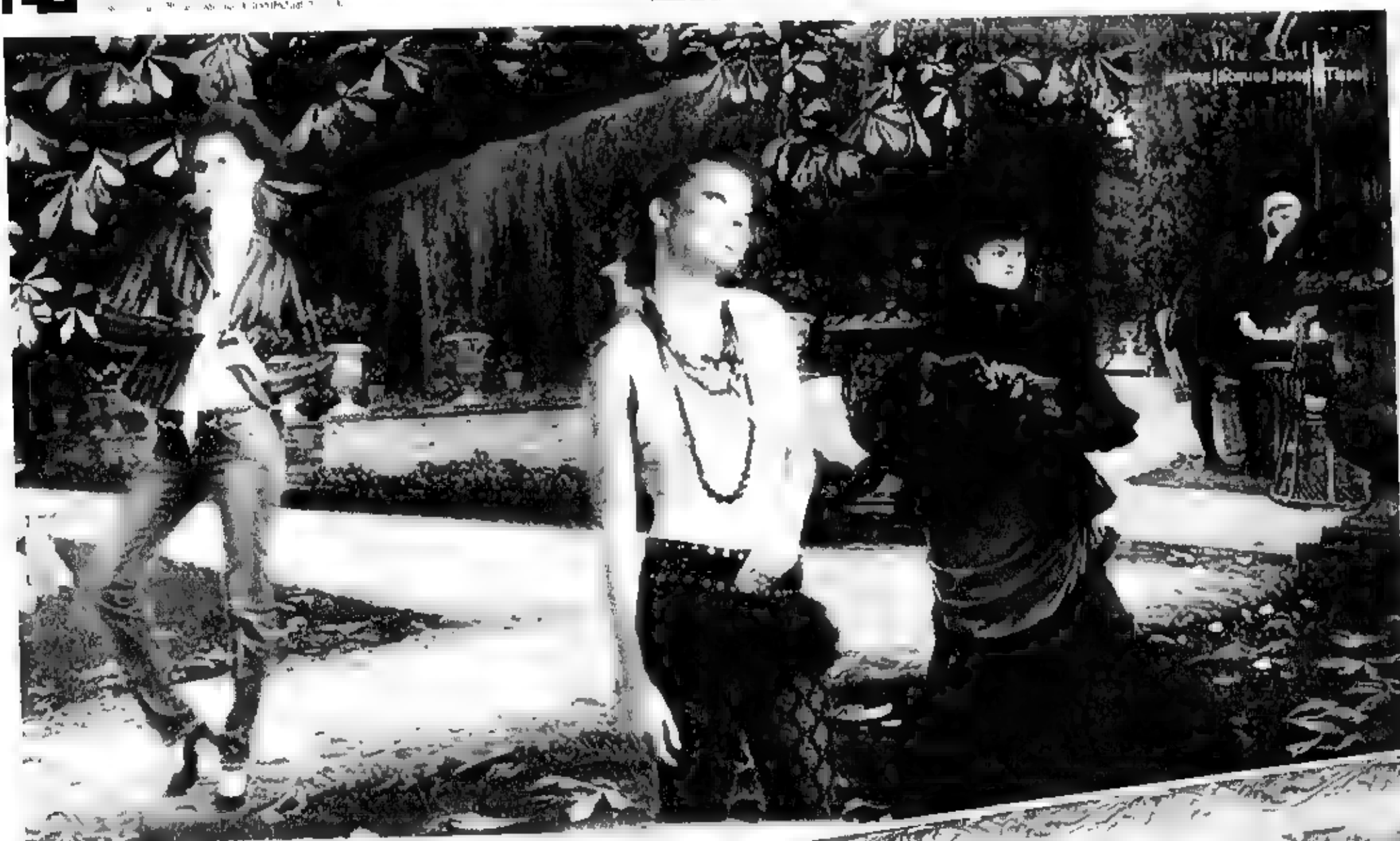
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On Nicolette: Ruffled halter top, beaded vest, tiered tulle skirt, laced tights and studded belt

Rock chic
 with a
 romantic
 twist? It's a
 rebellious yet
 glamorous
 look

The new school of rock

By Allison W. Lopez

LEATHER JACKET, denim mini, slogan T-shirt, black stockings, knee-high boots, steel accessories. Add to that dyed hair, piercings, tattoos and black-painted fingernails for the perfect f**k-you sign.

It's pretty easy to look like a chick who digs rock music. Subtlety is definitely out of the question. An "I don't give a damn" attitude is re-

quired. Everything is dark, rough and tumble, sometimes even bordering on crass and trash.

Dressing up like a hardcore rock chick, though, is old school. The new school of rock? Rock chic with a romantic twist. Think vintage Victorian—ruffles, lace, ribbons, puffed sleeves, soft chiffon and crushed silk—all mixed and (mis)matched with the harshness of leather, denim and in-your-face accessories like huge cuffs, killer stiletos, even fake fur. It's a look that's glamorous but cheeky, sweet yet seductive.

Black is no longer the national anthem. In order to look less daunting and more feminine, you'd want a brush of color here and there. Not to worry—you won't be asked to wear fuchsia. Basic neutrals like beige, ivory and white, and reddish hues like plum and



ON ROSEANA: Striped crew-neck shirt, gray rock-and-roll shirt and eyelet-trimmed wraparound blouse. **On Nicolette:** White jacket, white cropped trousers, ruffled halter top, eyelet-trimmed and wraparound blouse

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mauve will add that ladylike feel without detracting from the whole bad-girl aura.

Denim is the undeniable staple of the rock-chic look. It's sexy and versatile—whether washed-out, torn or embellished. Skinny jeans look especially hot nowadays. Pair them with a graphic tee during the day, or a silky cami at night. Layering is also key when it comes to different textures. Aside from cropped jackets, vests are also making a big comeback.

For attitude with an enormous A, the key word is accessorize. Oversized sunglasses, necklaces, bangles, studded leather belts and bags do the talking, while fab finds (leopard-print platform!) from your fave ukay-ukay can up the ante and personalize your look. There's not much restraint; the overall look is reckless and excessive.

Usually there's a temptation to overdo even makeup. Don't! If you choose smoky eyes, then that's just perfect with nude lips. And it's smoky, not swollen, okay? If you're thirsty for blood-red lips, go right on the eyes instead. Hair is loose and craftily disheveled—whether curly or straight—and preferably in one hue.

Experiment!

The thing to remember is NOT to look too put-together. Imagine picking random stuff from your closet, then wearing them all together and still managing to look über-stylish. Dig it? It may take you some time to experiment, but as in the freedom-loving '70s, just "go with the flow."

Such is actually the spirit of the Romantic

movement in the 1800s, where creativity ruled and emotions were exalted, where artists believed in spontaneity, freedom from boundaries and rules. They generally rejected absolute systems, and asserted the importance of the individual, the unique, even the eccentric. Colors abounded in their palettes, and nature in all its splendor formed the predominant backdrop.

For added inspiration, channel Kate Hudson, a genuine rock chick. After playing Penny Lane in "Almost Famous," Hudson turned from reel into real groupie with her marriage to rock star Chris Robinson of Black Crowes. Her love for things bohemian equals a look of carefree, wild-child abandon.

The rock-chic look is for someone who craves attention but denies loving it, someone who's willing to push borders and pull out all the stops. Dutch the scare fare. You don't even need to scowl, dearie. Just a flirty smile and a wink, and rock stars will fall and do the worshipping. Art and fashion, after all, can be very suggestive.

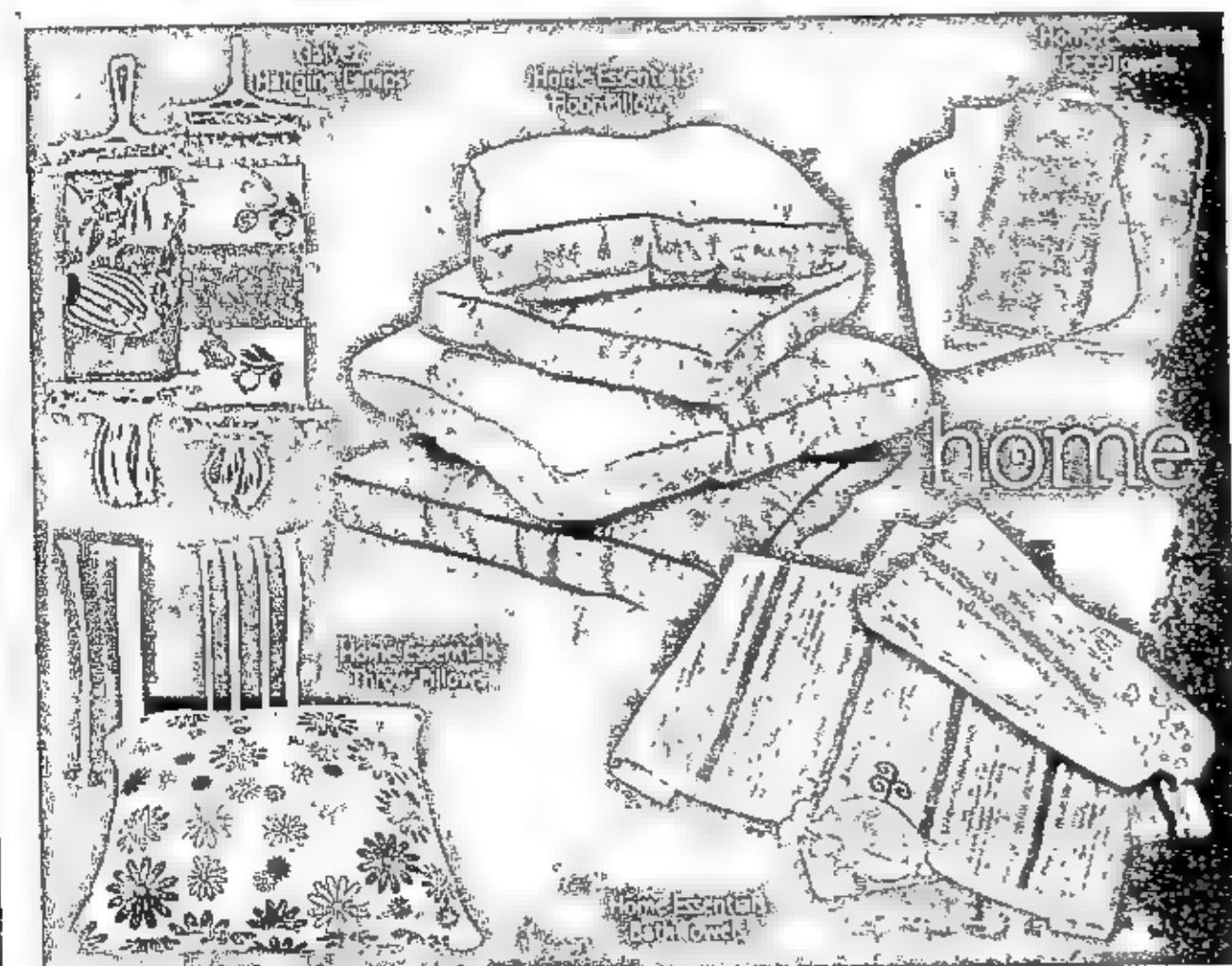
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PHOTOGRAPHY: SARA BLACK
 STYLING: PATTY QUINONES
 MAKEUP: ROBBIE PINERA
 HAIR: RAYMOND SANTIAGO OF THE SALON
 MODELS: NICOLETTE BELL
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ON NICOLETTE: Eyelet-trimmed wraparound blouse, plinstriped pink bustier top and khaki belted trousers. **On Roseana:** Gray rock-and-roll shirt and tiered tulle skirt

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Art start

Three designers are managing the transition from one art form to another seamlessly

By Alex Y. Vergara

IN CASE YOU STILL DON'T know (or haven't accepted yet), fashion design is a legitimate form of art. In fact, some of today's young talents were already steeped in various art forms before they branched out and found their respective niches in the world of fashion and accessories.

In her desire to improve her fabric installations, for instance, painter and sculptor Patty Eustaquio took up pattern making two years ago under Joji Lloren. She became so fascinated with her new-found skill that, apart from accepting commissioned artworks, she soon found herself designing clothes for other people.

"I used to view it as an accident," says the petite fine arts graduate from the University of the Philippines. "But come to think of it, it seemed like a natural progression since I've always loved dressing up since I was little."

On a practical note, Eustaquio feels more financially secure now that she has two sources of income. She has no intention of abandoning the visual arts. The artist-designer, however, is the first to admit that she's a very poor time manager.

"I try to make up for it by being adept at multitasking," says Eustaquio, whose atelier in Makati also doubles as her art studio.

Sumptuous pieces

Fashion and accessories designer Yvonne Quisumbing-Romulo, who has earned a reputation for crafting sumptuous and heavily embellished pieces using such components as leather cutouts, crystal beads and coarse thread, was unwittingly lured into fashion by Inno Sotto himself.

While taking up interior design at the Philippine School of Interior Design some years back, she had to cross-enroll at the College of St. Benilde (CSB), where she crossed paths with the veteran designer.

"Inno was teaching fashion design then," she explains. "Such was his influence on me that after finishing interior design, I immediately took up fashion design at CSB."

She was already into painting way back in high school, thanks to artist-brother Anton Quisumbing. In fact, she initially wanted to take up fine arts, but her family encouraged her to pursue either architecture or interior design.

Her killer schedule these days doesn't afford her to dress up like her chic clients, but even as a child, Quisumbing-Romulo already took pleasure in seeing well-dressed people.

Call of fashion

Unlike his female colleagues, James Reyes was already holding a regular job in one of the country's leading ad agencies when the call of fashion beckoned.

As the agency's associate creative director, the advertising graduate from UP did a lot of layouts and illustrations by hand. Using a

computer to accomplish such tasks was then in its infancy.

"Working with the computer helped me manage the transition from graphic to fashion design much later," he says. "It (computer) has a way of making your illustrations look three dimensional."

Reyes' interest in fashion began way back in high school, but it had to take a back seat as a young adult. In between the years he spent at Campaigns & Grey, he occasionally did fashion illustrations for this paper's lifestyle pages.

The status quo began to change when he decided to join the Mega Young Designers' Competition four years ago. It was more out of whim, as Reyes didn't have the wherewithal to execute his entry.

"I think doing fashion illustrations honed me to present my ideas well," he says. "Imagine my surprise when I ended up as one of the 10 finalists."

Thanks to good friend Greg Centeno, Reyes was able to flesh out his idea into a decent dress. Aside from lending him the services of his cutter and sewer, Centeno provided the upstart designer with a venue to work on his piece.

Reyes represented the country in the Paris competition later that year before he finally decided to quit advertising and pursue fashion design full-time. In the meantime, he took a short course on dressmaking at Slim's.

"Changing careers wasn't easy," he admits, "but somehow I was able to deal with it. Time and again, I seek the advice of good friends

like Ivar (Aseron), Dennis (Lustico) and Joji."

Practical art

Clothes may just be another medium for these designers, but they see to it that lines are clearly drawn between their various endeavors. Quisumbing-Romulo, for instance, makes sure that her clothes are "wearable, washable and dry-cleanable."

"I treat my clothes as works of art," she says. "But at the same time, they have to be practical. Embellishments, for example, are mostly confined within the chest area to frame the face. I also make sure clients can sit on the clothes."

But if Eustaquio's experience is anything to go by, there are no conscious delineations as far as an artist's thought process is concerned.

"It wasn't like that in the beginning," she says, "but right now it's starting to merge in my head."

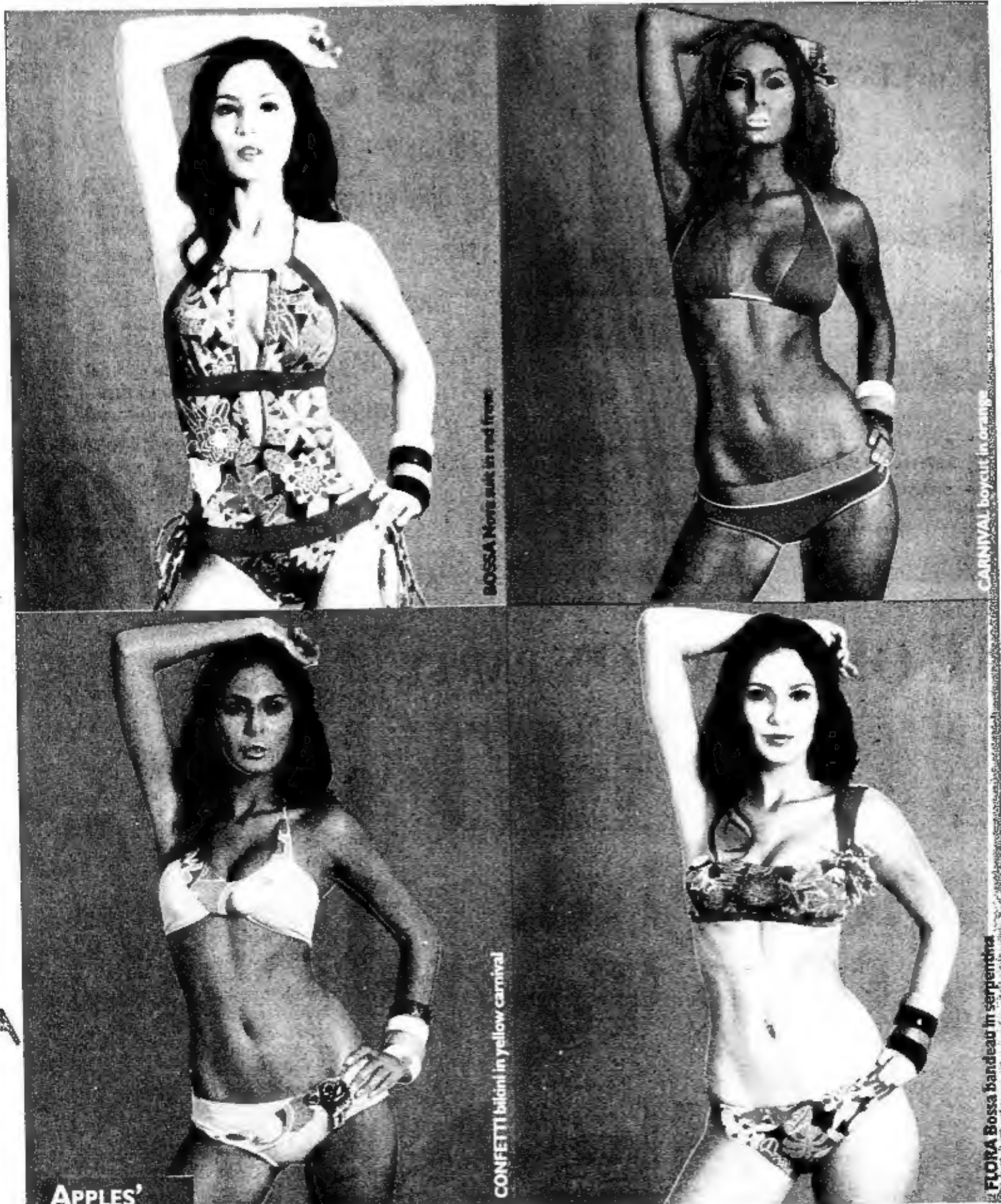
Like her two colleagues, she credits her background in the arts for her ability to compose and visualize three-dimensional pieces. Because of their exposure as artists, they also have a wealth of influences and inspirations to draw from. All three, by the way, are members of the prestigious Young Designers' Group.

From one art form to another, from one discipline to the next, these artists-cum-designers seemed to be managing the transition seamlessly.

E-mail the author at avergara@inquirer.com.ph



Eye-Popping beach babe picks



APPLES' PICKINGS



Apples Aberin-Sadhwani

TRANSPORT YOURSELF to the exotic beaches of Brazil and channel that goddess (or should I say girl?) from Ipanema who was rightfully immortalized in Jobim's timeless Bossa Nova classic. Can't do it literally? Try slipping on any one of Speedo by Rosa Chá's swimwear collection and let your imagination do the rest. In a bold, much-needed update of

their swimwear line, the company that first designed the racerback swimsuit in 1928 collaborated with Brazil's hottest swimwear designer Rosa Chá in 2005 to come up with a sophisticated, cosmopolitan collection for fashion-conscious consumers. Following the success of last year's partnership, the established swimsuit company once again joined forces with the trailblazing designer to present their spring/summer 2006 collection, which sun lovers and beach goddesses will surely covet. Taking inspiration from strong

Brazilian musical influences, Chá employed vibrant colors, intricate adornments and embroideries to reflect the vibrant, Afro-Brazilian rhythms of Maracatu, celebrated at carnival in the Pernambuco region of Brazil. For a more laid-back, romantic feel, she then used softer, more muted colors and prints inspired by Bossa Nova, Brazil's mellow, sophisticated beach grooves. Speedo, which was undeniably a market leader in the competitive athletic arena, finally offers stylish options for fashionistas in search of seriously sexy beach-babe getups or pool-

side glamour gear. So remember, next time you want to look or at the very least, feel, anything like Jobim's tall, tan and lovely seaside heartbreaker, all you need is a relatively active imagination, a good dose of confidence and a Brazilian-inspired swimsuit, of course!

E-mail the author at afashion@inquirer.com.ph

PHOTOGRAPHY: SARA BLACK
MODEL: BRUNA ABDALAH CHRISTOFOLI
GRAPHIC ARTIST: BLISS MABINI
MAKEUP ARTIST: ALLEN ROSALES
SWIMWEAR: SPEEDO BY ROSA CHÁ

The great swimsuit search

Swimsuit shopping need not be a frustrating experience. Learn how to highlight what you love about your figure and how to disguise the parts you hate by following this simple guide:

• **Fit** is the most important consideration. Focus on how the suit looks and feels on your body, not the number on the tag, and remember the following fit-tips:

STRAPS
Swimsuit straps should lie comfortably on your shoulders; if they dig in, try a bigger size. If they fall off, go one size down. Move around to see if the straps stay on.

BODY
For one-piece suits, the torso portion should sit perfectly flat and conform to the shape of your body and spine.

The seams shouldn't push or pull and there should be no pulling on your bust, straps and crotch.

BUST
Lift your arms to ensure that you have enough coverage and the bra does not move up.

Adjustable straps are best as you'll feel comfortable and secure.

Tops with underwire or built-in cups should fit as well as your bra.

Your top should contain without constricting.

LEG OPENINGS
The leg opening and waistband should never dig into your skin. If it does, go a size up.

If you need more coverage, pick another style, not a bigger size.

The most flattering leg height or opening is one inch below the top of the hipbone. Start with that and experiment with other styles.

Take your activity into account. If you intend to engage in water sports like sailing, windsurfing and the like, pick a more practical suit such as a two-piece with a dependable top that will stay in place.

Try on styles you think you can never wear. String bikinis might surprisingly look good on you. These skimpy numbers may seem unflattering but because it's adjustable, the suit will not dig into your skin. Try suits with prints, patterns, color blocking and details like shirring or a belt so you can find ways to draw attention to your assets and disguise your flaws.

Experiment with colors. No need to stick with basic but slimming black. Consider your skin tone and choose hues that will complement it. Plus, improve your proportions by using dark hues on areas you would like to minimize and bright colors on areas you would like to emphasize.

SOURCE: THE LUXE SHOPPING PARTIAL BYRON PACE AND ANNEAL CHISTOFOLI IN THE SPIRITS OF STYLE WITH PATRICIA OF STYLE

Diamante DAZE

WHEN ANDY WARHOL channeled his artistic prowess into, of all things, Campbell's soup cans, some souls in the world probably did a double-take and said, "What the—?"

But the soup cans have endured, reaching immortal pop-art status, proving that yes, anyone—anything—can have 15 minutes of fame.

True enough, these days the camera hog herd can become popular using the PH (Paris Hilton) formula: skimpy attire + "that's hot" pose = flashbulb fame.

And anything can become a work of art. In this day and age of mass production, there's a longing for the extraordinary—that special something that can make you stand out from the rest of the pack. The few, the proud and the seriously loaded are on the prowl for The Next Luxe Loot.

Hello trinkets!

Cell phones first appeared in our lives (in the shoulder pad-obsessed '80s) as big, bulky devices that could double as murder weapons, with a hefty price tag to match. Back then, they were the prized possessions of the rich and the powerful.

Today, everybody owns a cell phone, from your honey's barber to the tinseltown at your favorite Jolliejeep to life-sized Bratz doll Paris Hilton herself. And in a cell phone-crazed country such as ours, everybody's doing his best to personalize these babies: cool covers, fancy pouches or the latest mind-invading ring tones ("Hello Moto auto mo'to...").

Enter luxury cell phones—embellished, bejeweled, encrusted and downright dazzling.

Emerging from a tradition of excellence and prestige in the private haute jewelry industry,



Mabuhay!



Jenni Epperson

kets are not for the budget bunch. With the skyrocketing inflation rates, you'd rather than these mine marvels not be on your phone, but at the nearest pawnshop instead (kidding!).

Twinkle of an eye (lash)

In the 1960s, Twiggy made them famous, taking "wide-eyed look" to a whole new level. By the grunged-out 1990s, false eyelashes were labeled as way too flamboyant, an overly flashy fashion faux pas. They were considered the accessory of the stage actress, the Las Vegas showgirl with her endless legs and ostrich feathers (I love them flamboyant gazelles!).

By the 2001 Academy Awards, however, they had migrated to JLo's eyes. Her makeup artist requested cosmetics emperor Mr. Shu Uemura to create a special pair of red mink lashes, and a trend was sparked.

When Madonna wore her handmade, customized Shu Uemura diamond-encrusted mink false eyelashes for her Dance Floor Diva look (a look that cost \$10,000!), she fanned the flames some more, and these lashes have never looked back.

Bright, you-can-spot-me-50-miles-away purple, or a lush black that borders on velvet and leaves you feeling like Marlene Dietrich,

Haute jeweler Carissa Oledan Coscolluela turns staple accessories of our generation into true works of art



Sapphires and diamonds false eyelashes available at Shu Uemura

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Consider Carissa Oledan Coscolluela's false eyelashes from Shu Uemura, encrusted not only with diamonds, but sapphires, rubies and emeralds as well. All your best friends are here, girls. Yummy!

If you're itching for what's hot and you've got wads of cash to spare, by all means, reach for these baubles. These eye candies can become heavyweight investments in so many years, just like those Warhol soup cans and detergent boxes.

A word to the wise, however. If you do decide to get your paws on one, do yourself a favor and try not to leave it in a VIP booth or a powder room. And whatever you do, don't let them catch you saying, "Let them eat cake!"

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THE MARCH 28 BEJEWELED LAUNCH IS PRESENTED BY SHU UEMURA, MOTOROLA, SMART INFINITY AND CARISSA OLEDAN COSCOLLUELA, AND SUPPORTED BY BAILEY'S, SHIRAZOFF AND MEGAWORLD. THE SHU UEMURA TOKYO LASH BAR FALSE EYELASHES ARE NOW AVAILABLE AT SHU UEMURA COUNTERS. CALL RUSTAN MAKATI (813339 LOCAL 220) AND RUSTAN'S SHANGRI-LA PLAZA HILL (6334636 LOCAL 120) FOR A PERSONALIZED LASH CONSULTATION. THE MOTOROLA V3I PHONE IS ALSO ALREADY AVAILABLE IN THE MARKET FOR EVERY SMART INFINITY SUBSCRIPTION MADE ON THE NIGHT OF THE LAUNCH. RECEIVE A MOTOROLA V3I, TWO RAZR V3I AND SHU UEMURA SUMMER ESSENTIALS KIT.

Eye-Popping beach babe picks



BOSSA Nova suit in red fredo

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APPLES PICKINGS



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Think of it as the Faberge Easter egg for the modern woman.

Carissa comes from a family of jewelers so exclusive that you need a personal intro to even get to see their stuff (stuff that dazzled Imelda and her Blue Ladies). Carissa has adorned the face of the sleek and spanking-new MotoRazr V3i with real diamonds, sapphires, emeralds and rubies in sparkling waves and hoops. This limited edition truly caters to "those with the luxury of true luxury."

It's less about ring tone and more about bling stone. Which makes perfect sense when you consider that tinseltown's elite have got jewels on their teeth, their pimp cups, their pets' dog collars.

Obviously, however, these treasured trinkets



Mabuhay!



Jenni Epperson

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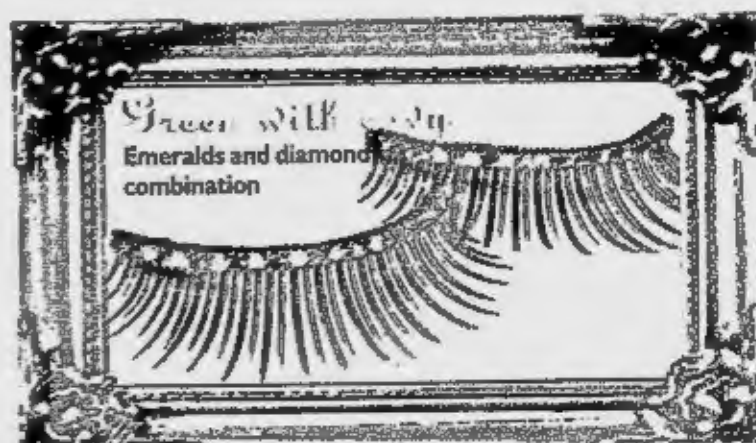
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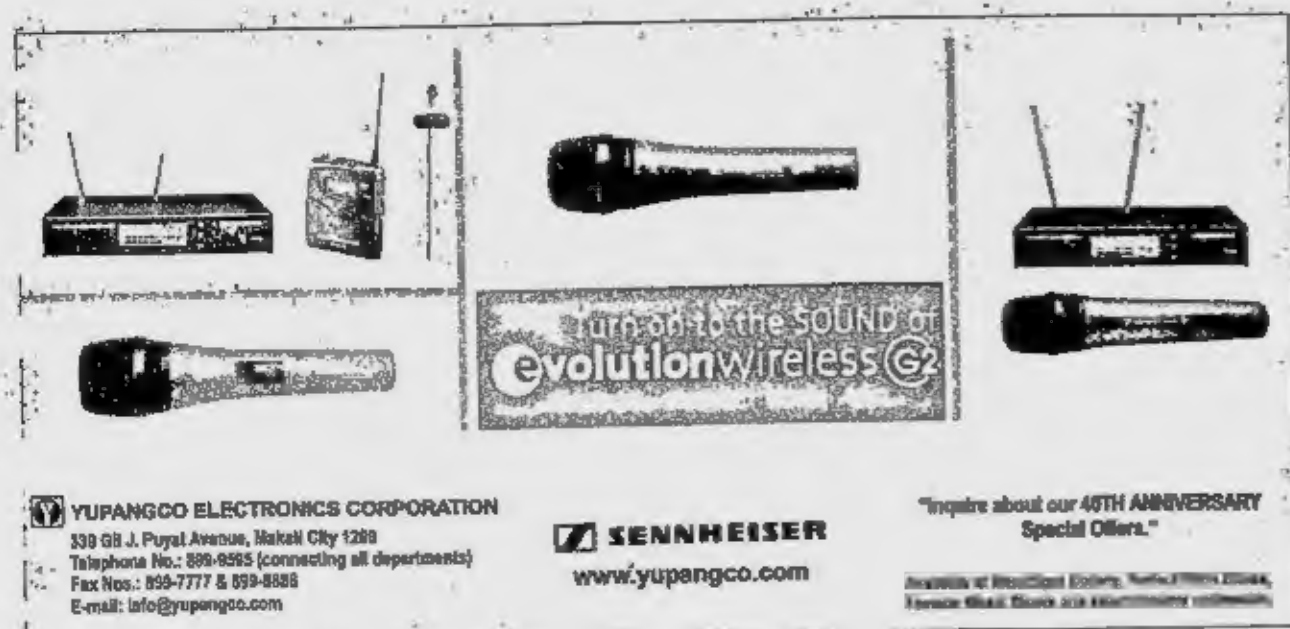
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This season's bold prints seem to have jumped off framed works by a wide pantheon of artists

By Cheche V. Moral

WHETHER IT'S true that art inspires fashion, or the masters were mere chroniclers of the fashions of their time (therefore it's fashion that affects art), there's no mistaking the influence of art movements in contemporary trends, as evidenced by the Spring 2006 collections.

Rich and elaborate ornamentations that hark back to 17th- to 18th-century baroque architecture are manifested in some of spring's extravagant embroideries and ruffled dresses.

Some come in luxurious gilded fabrics fit for Marie de Medicis. The abundance of ruffles and high collars at Balenciaga are reminiscent of Boucher's and Fragonard's women. Rei Kawakubo for Comme des Garçons even accessorized her catwalk mannequins with crowns.

Spring's bold prints seem to have jumped off framed works by specific artists, like Pierre- Joseph Redouté's roses onto Valentino's floral-print pieces and Dolce and Gabbana's shoes and bags. A couple of dresses and a handbag by Donna Karan conjured the palette of the surrealist Joan Miró, while Fendi's is reminiscent of "Remembrance of a Garden," a work by the Swiss expressionist Paul Klee.

Floral appliques have also turned up in the dresses and shoes by Carolina Herrera, in her nod to the early 20th-century Viennese Arts and Crafts Movement. In the same vein, some fashion houses also came out with Arts and Crafts-inspired accessories, like embroidered, and lace and floral-beaded bags from Fendi.

Others looked to the East for reference, perhaps



THE BOLD graphics on this Donna Karan dress recall Joan Miró's "Personnage Devant Le Soleil."



well-timed for the release of the Hollywood flick "Memoirs of a Geisha." Oriental prints, stylized kimonos and modern takes on the obi were sent to the runways by Lanvin, Paco Rabanne, Alexander McQueen, Dries Van Noten. There were bags with bamboo handles at Gucci and, from Lanvin, Japanese-inspired platform heels that bring geisha getas to mind.

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EIGHTEENTH-century ruffled high collars, like the one worn by the woman in Jean-Honoré Fragonard's "The Reader," ca. 1770-1772, reappear in this off-white Balenciaga.



VALENTINO'S summer dress with matching clutch and heels echoes Pierre-Joseph Redouté's "Rosa Indica, Grande Indienne."



FENDI'S dress is reminiscent of Paul Klee's "Remembrance of a Garden," ca. 1914.



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